Whazzup! Magazine

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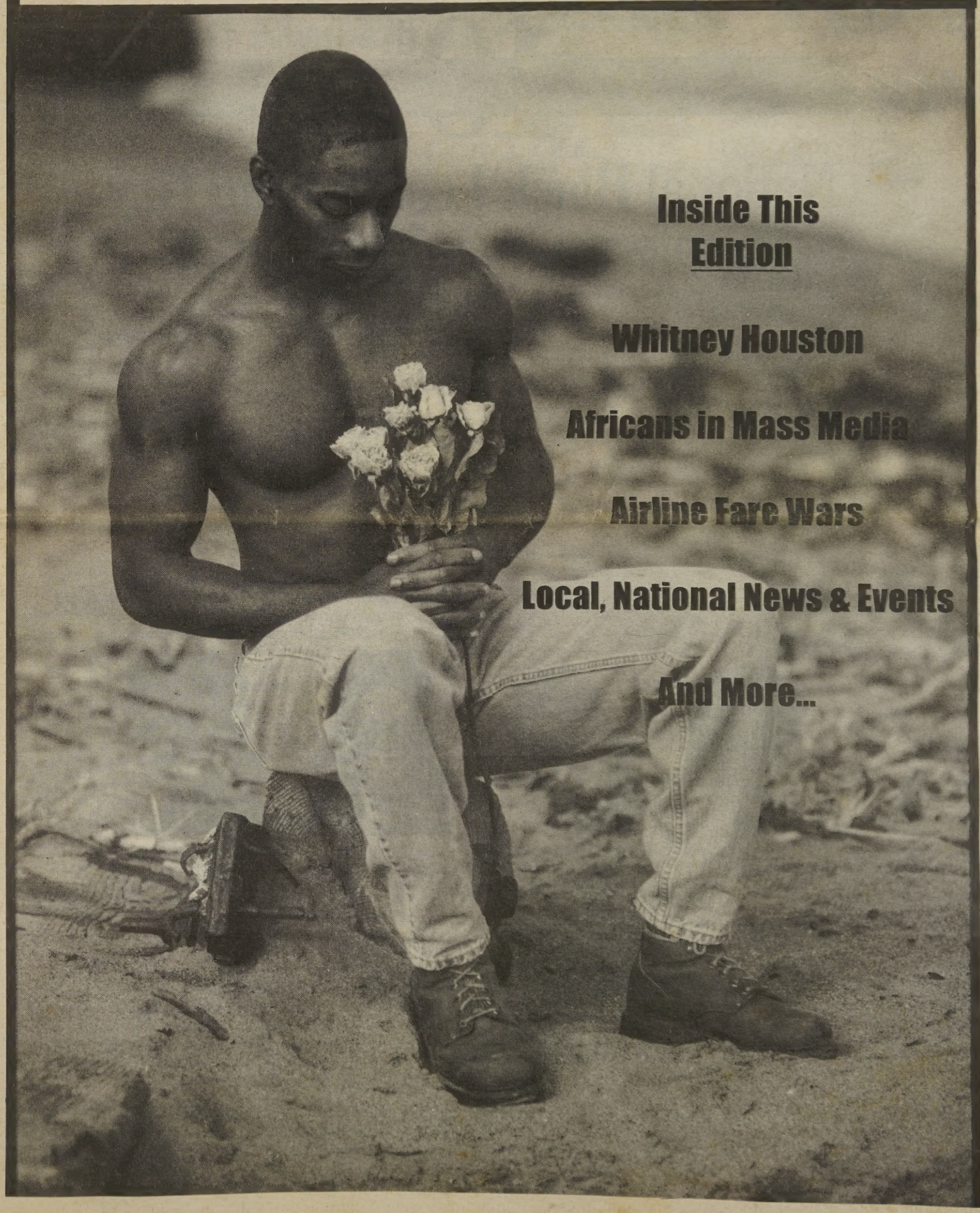

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10th ANNIVERSARY

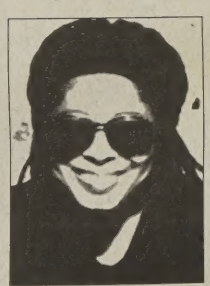
Celebrating Our Legacy

National Black Lesbian and Gay Conference and Institutes

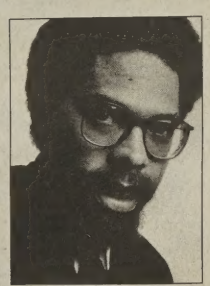
February 13-17, 1997
Long Beach, California

Dr. Joycelyn Elders
AIDS/Healthcare Institute

June Jordan
Conference Opening Ceremony



Alice Walker
Conference Opening Plenary



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Conference Closing Ceremony

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National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum
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Whazzup! Magazine

All letters and comments welcome:
Whazzup! Magazine
P.O. Box 30993
Oakland, CA 94604-3693
VOICE: 510.836.4759 FAX: 510.836.4758
EMAIL: Whazzup411@aol.com

Staff
Editor / Publisher - Stephen Johnson
Associate Editor - Leyla Farah
Political Editor - David Simmons
Travel Editor-Ron Fulcher
Marketing Coordinator - Demetres Munford

Advertising & Sales Representatives:

Concept and Design Marketing - Local & National
2501 Ivy Drive Suite 19
Oakland, CA 94606
VOICE: 510.836.4759 FAX: 510.836.4758
EMAIL: Whazzup411@aol.com

Rivendell Marketing Company - National
212.242.6863

John Brisbane - Oakland / Bay Area
Lawrence Denson - Los Angeles / Southern California
Cseneca Parker - Los Angeles / Southern California
James Morgan - Los Angeles / Southern California

Editorial Contributors:
D-minor
Ramona Lofton
Kheven L. Lagrone
Ron Fulcher
Dino
Chaz
Stephen Johnson
Electronic Urban Report (EUR)
Robert Wesley
Marvin White
We Are Family
Andy Hanushevsky

Cover Model
Tom Comans
Cover Photography
Duane Cramer
Centerfold Photography:
Valerie Phillips

Additional Photography:
Hopeton Stewart and Duane Cramer

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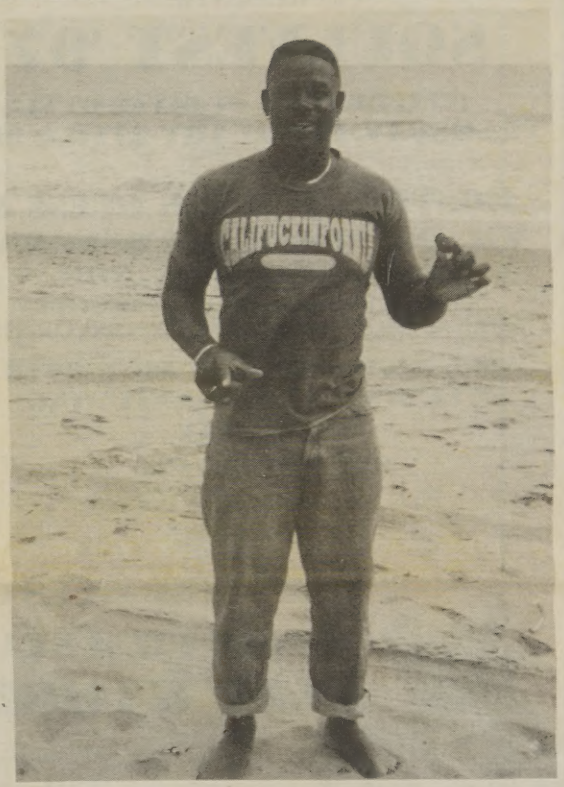
Letter From The Editor



Stephen Johnson Photo: Lamarr

I don't believe that there are many African Americans who doubt the importance of Black history and the celebration of Black History Month. Many of us believe that it is our history that makes us who we are today.

The tragedy of Black history as it is in America is that because of the early American's efforts to conditionalize and train us as animals and *slaves instead of* human beings, many of us know very little about our true ancestral history.

The glory of celebrating Black History Month is that in the relatively small time that we have been in this country, our African American ancestors have made tremendous strides and contributions towards the progression of this nation.

We can definitely be proud of the sweat, blood and tears that out forefathers and mothers shed before us, however, we can't rely on their accomplishments to continue to push us into the future. Their relentless efforts to achieve freedom, equality and spatiality will be remembered only if we make up our minds not to forget. I am a firm believer that those who forget the past are destined to repeat it. I also believe that we are in the midst of creating history for ourselves, our sons, daughters and the children of tomorrow.

We are doing this by beginning and continuing by to be responsible for our lives. We are also creating our future by educating ourselves about what is important to us. I am concerned with the few that spend more time blaming others, the system and the past for the condition of their lives as opposed to rolling up their sleeves, getting *hell* dirty and involving themselves in the process of redirecting and guiding their lives so that it is consumed with faith, love, purpose and action. Just as this was the formula for our most celebrated ancestors, I am sure that it will be the formula for our success today and in the future.

There will be many ways in the upcoming year that we will be able to ensure the advancement of our people. I am convinced that the surest way will be to commit to believing in ourselves and to support each other in this struggle that we call life. This is something that must begin in our hearts and in our homes. If we need further inspiration, and we will, we can seek support through Local and National groups and events that exist just because of us. In addition to the entertaining aspects of this publication you will valuable information pertaining to some of these organizations and events. It is my hope that you will access at least one of these vehicles of empowerment. After all, just like Whazzup! Magazine... They are here for you!

Peace and Love,

Stephen Johnson
Editor / Publisher

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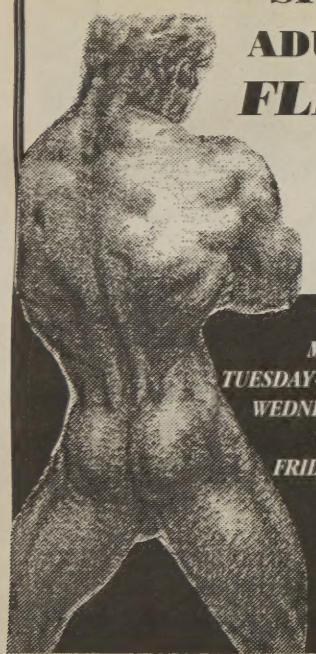

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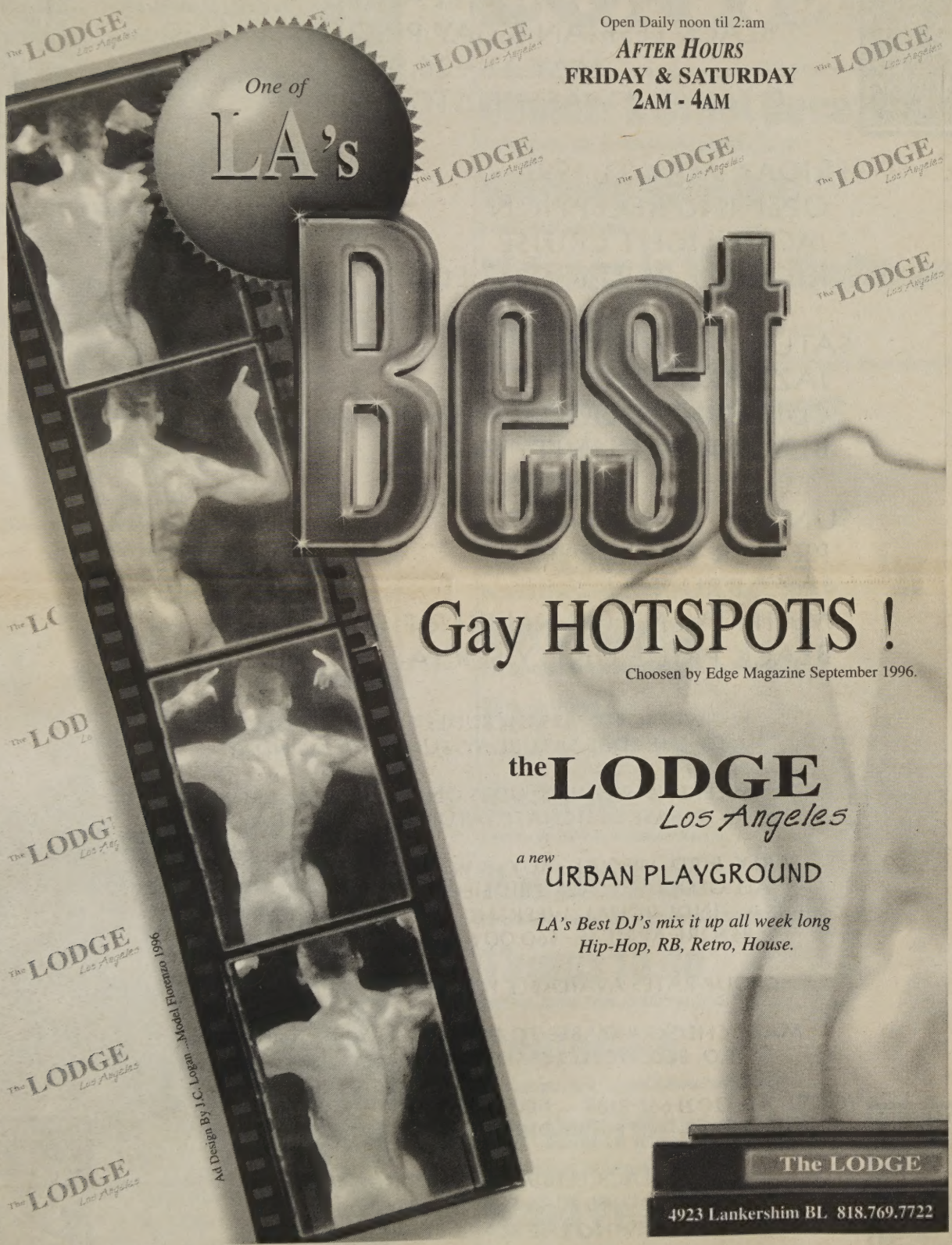
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BLACK LESBIAN & GAY ACTIVISTS LEAD MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY OBSERVANCE IN ATLANTA

"None of us is free as long as lesbians and gays can be legally fired from their jobs in 41 states in the nation." - Keith Boykin

Atlanta -- For the first time ever, two black lesbian and gay activists helped lead the official national commemoration of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday on January 20, 1997.

Keith Boykin, Executive Director of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum, and Dr. Sylvia Rhue, co-producer of the award-winning film "All God's Children," were Grand Marshals for the King Day parade.

Boykin and Rhue marched from downtown Atlanta to historic Auburn Avenue, side by side with the King Family, including Coretta Scott King, the founder of the Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolent Social Change. They were also joined by Spellman College President Johnetta Cole and numerous civil rights activists.

Following the march, Boykin and Rhue each spoke to thousands of people at the King Day Rally held outside the King Center in Atlanta. Reminding the crowd that "none of us are free until all of us are free," Boykin added, "None of us is free as long as lesbians and gays can be legally fired from their jobs in 41 states in the nation."

Prior to the march, Boykin spoke to the annual Bayard Rustin Rally, where more than 100 lesbians and gays gathered to commemorate the legacy of Bayard Rustin, the civil rights leader who was a close adviser to Dr. King and a black gay man.

On Sunday, January 19, Rhue and Boykin participated in an historic presentation and discussion at all-male Morehouse College about the black church and homosexuality. Dr. Rhue showed the film "All God's Children" at King's Chapel at Morehouse and led a discussion afterwards.

The National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum is the only national organization representing the estimated two and a half million African-American lesbians and gays. Established in 1988, the Forum works to empower black lesbians and gays by developing their leadership skills, increasing their visibility, and building bridges between their various communities.

LESBIAN AND GAY LEADERS MEET WITH VICE PRESIDENT GORE BLACK GAY & LESBIAN ISSUES ADDRESSED

Washington -- As the Clinton/Gore Administration begins its second term, Vice President Al Gore met with seven leaders from the lesbian and gay community at the White House on January 17, 1997.

"The meeting set a constructive foundation for future relations with the Vice President," said Keith Boykin, Executive Director of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum, who attended.

Boykin, who served for two years in the White House as a Special Assistant to President Clinton, urged the Vice President to continue appointing openly lesbian and gay officials to his staff. The group also emphasized the need for needle exchange programs to stop the spread of AIDS, increased funding of Medicaid, and support for the Employment Non Discrimination Act (ENDA), which outlaws employment discrimination against lesbians and gays.

Other participants at the meeting included: Roberta Achtenberg, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Elizabeth Birch, President of the Human Rights Campaign; Kerry Lobel, Executive Director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force; Martin Ornelas-Quintero, Executive Director of Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization; Jeff Soref, a gay Democratic activist; and Jeff Trammel, Chairman of the Board of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.

During the historic meeting, Gore acknowledged that African Americans tend to be very supportive and understanding of lesbian and gay issues, rebutting the stereotype that blacks are more homophobic than whites. "I was pleased that the Vice President seems to understand our issues," said Boykin, "but we must continue to educate the Administration and the public about the reality of our lives."

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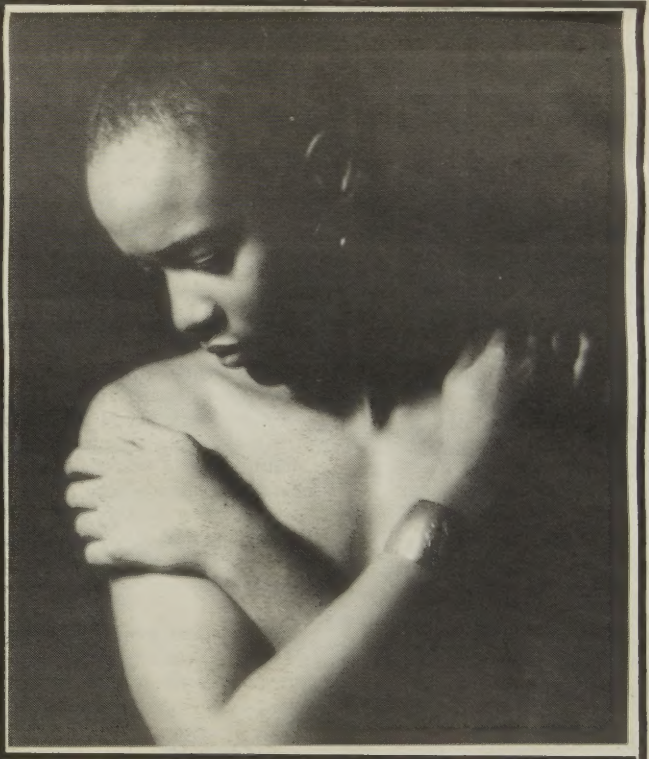

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Whitney Houston

-Stephen Johnson*

Although this Songstress/Actress's history began with her birth on August 9, 1963 in Newark, NJ. I had only become aware of her in 1985. I was 21 years old and Whitney's image, beauty and singing style moved me. Her first album was titled Whitney Houston, and it cost the record company $250,000, an unusual amount for a debut. Released in early 1985, it sold 12 million in the United States and more than 20 million worldwide. The songs included duets with Teddy Pendergrass and Jermaine Jackson. The hit singles from the album included "Saving All My Love For You," "How Will I Know," "You Give Good Love," "The Greatest Love of All," among others. She won a Grammy for "Saving All My Love For You" as Best Pop Vocal Female at the 1986 Awards.

I was in love. Even though I was a confirmed Black homosexual, Whitney was the girl that I would marry given the chance. She just seemed so right. She seemed bold yet approachable, daring yet shy, and definitely sexy. I didn't know at the time that prior to her music career she had began modeling for fashion magazines. She was told by a total stranger that Wilhelmina was looking for someone like her, this launched her into a modeling career. She appeared in Vogue, Seventeen, and Cosmopolitan. After graduating from a parochial high school in New Jersey, Whitney began to attempt in earnest to start her music career. She sang in a New York nightclub in a performance intended to showcase her talents to music executives. Clive Davis, president of Arista Records, was there that night. Since he was had been involved in the careers of both Aretha Franklin and Dionne Warwick, he was well disposed to her style of singing. He signed her to Arista.

Whitney was already blessed with a lineage that was deeply involved in music. Her father John Houston is now the head of a music management company. Cissy Houston, Whitney's mother, is a singer, first with a number of gospel and soul groups, and later as a back-up to Luther Vandross, Elvis Presley, Aretha Franklin and David Bowie. Dionne Warwick is Whitney's cousin, and Aretha Franklin, a family friend. Cissy was the Minister of Music at their church, and the young Whitney learned to sing starting there. "I grew up in the church, and gospel music has always been the center of our lives... At family celebrations, we always end up sitting around the piano and singing." She also practiced by singing Aretha Franklin songs in the basement of her house, pretending that it was Madison Square Garden.

"Like all of us in the family, Whitney was singing from the moment she came out," Cissy told Time. She decided by the age of twelve, that she wanted to be a singer. Her father was amazed at her first solo in church; "What I heard that day was the voice of a young woman coming from the throat of a 12 year-old-child," he told People magazine. Soon after, Whitney began singing backup on her mother's albums and went on to sing backing vocals for Lou Rawls, the Neville Brothers, and Chaka Khan.

Because of the success and longevity of Whitney's first album, her next album spent six months in limbo. It was the first album by a female singer to debut atop the charts. The album, like the first, appealed to a huge range of listeners. That cross-racial appeal (Essence magazine called it "massive white appeal") led to an odd refrain that Whitney's music wasn't 'black enough.' Whitney responded to this in Essence: "What's Black? I've been trying to figure that out since I've been in the business. I don't know how to sing Black and I don't know how to sing white, either. I know how to sing. Music is not a color to me. It's an art." She also told Essence, "I love [gospel]. But does it make a record and does it have worldwide appeal? And what happens after that? Longevity, that's what it's all about. If you're going to have a long career, there's a certain way to do it, and I did it that way. I'm not ashamed of it."

After the second album, Whitney spent some time recovering: making new friends, starting new businesses. Personal growth came first, followed by some charity work, and stretching her talents to new areas.

Houston was always "Little Miss Perfect" as a child, a taunt which rings strangely familiar, as Hilary de Vries noted, even today. Nearly every writer mentions going into an interview with Houston imagining her as a very pretty, very talented singer, without any distinctive personality, too 'perfect'. Nearly every writer comes out of those interviews surprised that Whitney not only is a real person, but that she's a strong personality with strong opinions.

Her mother, yearning for a daughter who was "Little Miss Perfect," sent her daughter to grade school in dresses, which provoked taunting by the other kids. So Whitney would bring blue jeans and change when she got to school: "Blue jeans saved my ass a lot of times," she told Life magazine. Houston seems to have done a lot of that in her life: appearing as the perfect girl for one audience, and then dressing herself up again, more casually, for another. And where did she find time for herself? Not until now, perhaps.

Her next album, I'm Your Baby Tonight, sold 4 million, a hit by most standards, but a bit disappointing after the performance of the first two albums. Gary Graff of the Detroit Free Press said that "What's really happening is that, after a sizzling start, Houston's career is cooling down and settling in at a level that's impressive by any standard-- except when measured against her prior accomplishments."

The album was nonetheless good one, with the, as usual, technical excellence of Houston's performance, and the songwriting and production skills of the now-red-hot team of L.A. Reid and Babyface. The two gave the album a heavier rhythm track, a more spontaneous sound. Whitney produced two tracks on the album herself, one of which she co-wrote with best friend BeBe Winans.

When Whitney married Bobby Brown, I was a bit upset. My vision of the girl next door had been shattered. The marriage took place the same year that Whitney's incredible remake of "I Will Always Love You" was on the top of most charts. She also starred in a film: The Bodyguard, with Kevin Costner. If anyone had thought her career was cooling down, they revised their opinion with the release of the soundtrack album. The Bodyguard soundtrack, largely carried by six new songs from Houston, was recently certified 14-times-platinum. Oprah Winfrey adopted the song "I'm Every Woman" as her own anthem. "I Will Always Love You," was ubiquitous for nearly a year. At the 1994 Grammy Awards show, Houston took three awards, big ones: Record of the Year and Pop Vocal Female for "I Will Always Love You," and Album of the Year for The Bodyguard Soundtrack.

Whitney and Bobby had a baby in 1993. Her name is Bobbi Kristina. By this time I had begun to think that maybe the marriage wasn't a farce after all.

Whitney's second movie, Waiting To Exhale, was released in December 1995. This critically acclaimed film, starring Whitney and Angela Bassett, went on to gross over 70 million dollars at the box office.

(The Whitney story continued on page 10)

Remember Your Own

By Oakland Born & Based Poet Marvin White

(The Whitney story continued on from page 8)

The soundtrack for Waiting To Exhale, featuring three new tracks from Whitney; "Exhale (Shoop Shoop)," "Count On Me," (duet with CeCe Winans) which was co-written by Whitney and Babyface, and "Why Does It Hurt So Bad," quickly became a Number One album which to date has sold over six million copies in the U.S.

In late May of 1996, Whitney completed work on her latest film project, The Preacher's Wife, co-starring Denzel Washington and directed by Penny Marshall. The Preacher's Wife and the accompanying soundtrack album were released in December, 1996, and a Whitney Houston Greatest Hits album is scheduled to come out soon.

In December of 1996 Whitney Houston suffered her second miscarriage in 2 ½ years. We often believe that musicians albums reflect the state of mind the musician was in when the album was recorded. If this is true, the successful soundtrack of "The Preacher's Wife", even though it was recorded before the miscarriage happened, truly reflects a time in Whitney's life when she needed to depend more deeply on her spiritual background in order to survive. Whitney Houston may not have been the box-office draw Touchstone had hoped she'd be with "The Preacher's Wife", but the songstress continues to pack a wallop with the distinctively gospel soundtrack.

Even still, Whitney continues trudging through the Hollywood biz. Her Houston Productions company is currently developing the Dorothy Dandrige story (for which she still has not decided whether she'll star in or not). Plus she'll be producing an adaptation of Cinderella for television in which singer/actress Brandy will star.

Here's to you Whitney. Keep pushin' on girl, we love you!

*Sources: Arista Records & Electronic Urban Report

Gather to call the name
son, father, grandfather, uncle and brother
gather to call the name
daughter, mother, grandmother, aunt and sister
look for all the sameness in our bodies
lips that we know are full with kiss
noses that swell with shine
foreheads that soak sun reflect moon
hair that naps tight with curl
find a history longer
than the month of February
and be told we are sons and daughters
from a long line of sons and daughters
we who have been taught to forget
are remembering our own
and we will tell and retell our stories and histories
this is black on black love

and it looks like you
brown and browner
it smells like you
earth and musk
it strong like you
back and shoulders
it soft like you
drums and jazz
do you hear it tonight
its that song that swayed to
that song that makes you close your eyes
shake your head in slow no's
and beg to have your burdens lifted to
its that song that lulled the baby on the hip
that saved the captured on the ship
its that song that said tonight we run to freedom
and the night and the song has always been ours
the "no more auction block for me..."
the "precious lord take my hand..."
the "come by here lord, come by here..."
this is black on black love

and its rolling in
like a spirit riding a storm
listen to the calm in your bones
listen to the trees cry and they do
listen to all thins that warn you to hold on
hold on to him and to her like this
like sea gripping at land
like shores spreading pulling river through
like east and west wind fight
to hold on to one another
as they turn in wild tornado
can you feel it
like the itch in your palm
when payday is near
can you feel it
like the cool bird song before an eruption
can you feel it
like a spirit riding a storm
this black on black love

The cry
the tear
the anger
the eulogy
the cremation
the scattering
the babies
the old ones
the found
the bashed
the fight
the guns
the vigil
the march
the community
the saved
the churching the flock
the hold
the strength
the night
the black on black love

and you who have held on to centuries
know
that survival is nothing new

and you who have prayed to sun gods
know
that love is nothing if not a ritual
and you who have gone inside one another
know
that it is deep enough to hide one another

gather to call the name
son and daughter
in the street and in the classroom
until it burns in the roof of our mouths
black on black love
gather to call the name
father and mother
in the home and in the work
until it melts like butter candy under the
tongue
black on black love
gather to call the name
grandfather and grandmother
in the church and in the choir
until it raises voice to gospel
gather to call the name
uncle and aunt
in the yard and in the kitchen
until it twirls us like a mantra
black on black love
black on black love
black on black love
black on black love
black on black love
black on black love
black on black love
black on black love
until...

Airline Fare Wars

By Ron Fulcher

Airlines may come and go, but what appears to be constant is fare discounting. Carriers acted once again this week to sustain their steady on-sale state.

But underneath it all, a gradual upward movement in the fares on which the discounts are based continues to cut into the apparent margin of savings for travelers. This week, major airlines extended until summer the broad-based discounting they introduced last month under the banner of a "winter" special. Continental Airlines touched off a new round when it cut as much as 40 percent off its lowest excursion fares, which normally require purchase 21 days before travel, and made them available on a two-week advance purchase basis.

As spring follows winter, the most recent reductions apply to domestic travel through June 11th, available for ticketing through 4 February. There is some minimum stay requirements. USAir, for one, responded with discounts that it said were nearly 50 percent. USAir also expanded the sale to include Canada and Europe, though the last travel date for the international destinations is 19 March. Typically, the major airlines match one another's fares on routes where they compete.

Before this sale began, there was only a week during which airlines were not actively selling deep discounts based on their lowest excursion fares in the United States. And, as a consequence, fliers have been able to buy tickets for travel at any time New Year's Day through 11 June-almost halfway through 1997-at significant discounts off of official excursion fares.

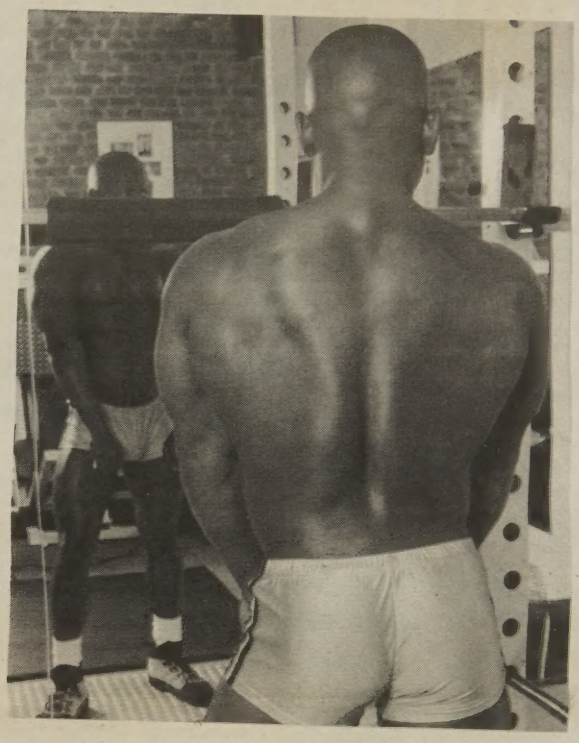
Fare Creep

Nevertheless, the virtually ceaseless sale does not necessarily mean fares are flat. The excursion fares on which the discounts are based have been creeping up over the past two to three years, says Ed Perkins, editor of the Consumer Reports Travel Letter. His benchmark, the 21-day advance-purchase fare between Los Angeles and New York, has been climbing at the rate of about $100 a year to reach its present level near $900. What's more, most airlines have not adjusted their fares to reflect the expiration last 31 December of a 10 percent federal ticket tax; instead, they've been holding total fares constant and pocketing the tithe. Perkins predicts Congress will reinstate the tax or legislate a similar fee within the next two or three months, and airlines will add it to the base fares in effect when that happens. "We are looking at an across the board 10 percent increase," he warns.

For more information or travel reservations, cruises, tour packages, group travel, Amtrak and international travel please contact Ron Fulcher at (800-484-2733 ext. 0564) outside California or (510) 268-1064 also E-mail: successtravel@msn.com

(Continued on page 21)

TORCH '97



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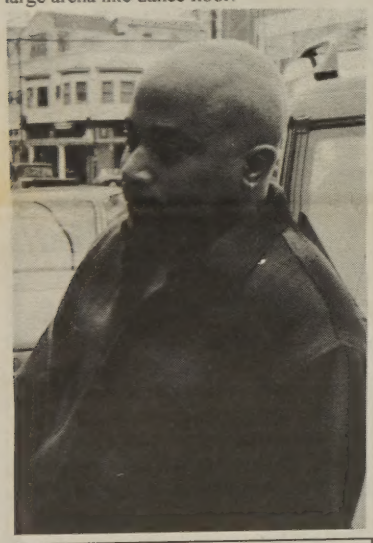
BAY AREA AND NATIONWIDE HAPPENINGS

Knight's "Black Out" to Open in the City

-Andy Hanushevsky
Courtesy of Oblivion Magazine

So you've been going to all the nightclubs and are starting to feel that you want a little bit more flavah, sparkle and sizzle. Well, the wait is over. "Black Out" will be opening Valentine's Day in Big Heart City, 836 Mission St. between 3rd and 4th in San Francisco, CA. The club has a beautiful space with a sitting lounge, five bars and a spacious interior balcony that surrounds a large arena like dance floor.



Club Promoter Kevin Night

Club promoter, Kevin Knight, promises that this club will be something the San Francisco and the Bay Area will talk about for some time. He has put two years of planing into this venture and has taken every detail into account. Kevin is not new to the club scene, having run the incredibly successful "Comfort Zone" in Oakland. It is four years old and still arguably the "Saturday Spot" in the East Bay. He plans to bring that energy to San Francisco with a fined tune mix of Soul Music and Urban House. "It's Soul Music with a kick. We're going to be fresh, innovative and set the trend," says Kevin. His passion and knowledge of music along with the DJ line up (Julius Perkins, Lily Tran, and Anthony Scott) is sure to make this club a hit. "There will be something going on all the time,"Kevin promised. "So even if you don't feel like dancing you'll always lose your cares. "Black Out" is sure to be a relief for people who are searching for relief from those same-old Friday Nights. All in all, "Black Out" is showing up as a venue that may push the Bay Area Club scene into new heights.

"Black Out's" Grand Opening will be Friday, February 14th, from 10pm to 4am with a "Back To The Jungle Theme" in Big Heart City, 836 Mission St., San Francisco, CA. It's free before 11pm with a nominal cover charge afterwards. You must be 21 and over. No dress code will be enforced.

Palm Springs To Host Empowerment Summit

-Los Angeles

African-American gay and Lesbian growing economic power in the gay and non-gay communities are finally making their presence felt throughout various cities in the United States.

On May 9, 10 and 11, 1997 Palm Springs will host its First African American Empowerment Summit. Beautiful Palm Springs boasts a large and diverse gay population as well as a constant stream of out of town, out of state, and international visitors. Barry Blackstone, the primary event coordinator, says, "I have challenged the gay and business community of Palm Springs to invite more African Americans to partake city's pleasure and accommodations. To my surprise they took me on." Consequently, Palm Springs, Cathedral City and other communities of the Coachella Valley are becoming the destination of choice for many African American gays, lesbians and transgenders.

Confirmed speakers at the summit to date include: Donald Perry, MBA - Managing general partner of Pine Cobble Partners, Stanley Bennet Clay- editor and publisher of SBC Magazine, Stephen Johnson - Editor and Publisher of Whazzup! Magazine, Mary Borders - Financial Planner for Borders and Associates and former congressional candidate Anita Rufus. Other speakers will be confirmed at a later date.

An evening festival and part will be held at the Choices entertainment Complex, May 10, 1997.

For further information please contact William DeBardelaben at (213) 733-5661 ext. 2, FAX (213) 733-9200 or Barry Blackstone at (619) 770-6053 FAX (619) 864-1453.

Black History Month Festival

Rev. Yvette Flounder

On Feb. 22, 1997 from 12-6pm there will be a Black History Festival fundraiser Celebration that will benefit the Center For AIDS Services at 5720 Shattuck Ave. Oakland ,CA. Pastor Yvette Flounder will be among several other participants that will provide entertainment for this special event. For more info contact James Roberson at 510-655-3435 or 510-655-9808 Walter Reed.

First Annual Black Women's Exchange Retreat

-Romona Lofton & D. Minor

A small yet powerful group of highly motivated and sprited African American women Gathered together in Clearlake, California during the Weekend of Nov. 8-10, 1996 to celebrate the First Annual B.W.X. Developement Committe Retreat. The theme of the event was affirming unity and respect within the community.The women gathered an shared their deepest feeling and concerns and were able to to facilitate a process that involved self empowerement and support.

BWX meets regularly on Fridays from 8-10pm, at 351 - 15th Street, Oakland, CA 94612. California and New members are encouraged to attend.

SF Pride Celebration Seeks Speakers

-San Francisco

The San Francisco Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Pride Celebration Committee announced an open call for public speakers and performing talent for the 1997 celebration and Pride Parade on June 28 & 29, 1997. This will be an exciting opportunity for those who apear to be seen and heard by thousands of attendees from all over the world. The theme for the 1997 event is "One Commnity, Many Faces."

In additional to the central event onSunday, June 29, the annual Pride Parade, the celebration in San Francisco actually starts the day before with a variety of public enteratainment events. At the conclusion of the parade on Sunday, thousands of particpants will spend the afterneeon together dancing and celebrating at the massive post-parade party.

Parties interested in performing should know that the parade commitee is seeking both ametuer and professional musicians, bands, comedians, MC's and performance artist. This year they will be featuring a separate women's stage. In order to be connsidered for a perfomance slot, you must submit either a demo cassete, CD or videotape in advance. The deadline for submissions is March 1, 1997. You will need to include your name, contact phone number(s) and mailing address with your submission. Because there is a limit to the number of performance slots, all entries by Parade Commitees following the deadline. Performers who are selected will be notified therafter. The committte will not be able to compensate performers for their appearance

BWX members gather for First Annual Retreat

BAY AREA AND NATIONWIDE HAPPENINGS

at this event. If you wnat your submission sent back to you, you will need toinclude a postage paid return envelope. You may send your submissions to: SLGBTPCC Celebration Commitee 1390 Market, Suite 1225, San Francisco, CA 94102

Nominations for speakers may also be sent to the same address. The committee will also be accepting nominations by FAX at (415) 864-5889 or e-mail at sfpride@aol.com. Nominations for speakers must be recieved by March 9, 1997. The general mebership will vote on the choice of speakers at the monthlu meeting held on the same date. General mebership meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at the Parade offfice in Fox Plaza. You obtain full voting rights after attending your second consecutive meeting. For more info regarding SF Pride call (415) 864-FREE or visit their website at http://www.SF-Pride.org.

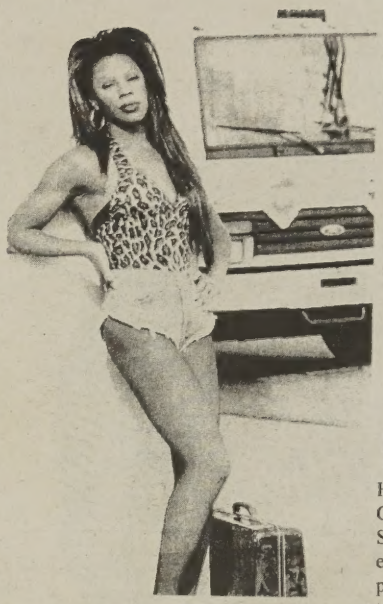
Ask Any Girl To Premiere in Los Angeles

-Los Angels, CA

Award winning producer/playwright/film maker Stanley Bennet Clay will present the world premiere of Robert Banks Ramirez' new drag diva comedy stage play "Ask Any Girl" in a limited 15 performance run that begins January 31st and runs through Sunday March 2, 1997. The performances will take place at the Stella Alder Theater 6773 Hollywood, Blvd.

Ask Any Girl is a character comedy about Mahogany St. Ross, a fierce Bay Area African American transgender diva who comes to Los Angeles for the memorial service of her best friend, Donny, who recently died of AIDS. Arriving at Donny's apartment she confronted with Donny's also gay twin brother, Ronald, who is a recent Harvard Law School graduate. The night before the service the service the pack Donny's things, including his precious Diana Ross photos and memorabilia. The two abandoned Supremes (Mahogany & Ronald) exchange jugular wit-and -parry, share sweet memories of life long friendships, endure the pain of loss and come to appreciate the pleasure of friendships while enjoying a new bond borne of mutual love of a friend and a brother and the loss of their very own Miss Ross.

Jazzman, a TV, club personality and noted drag celebrity and Wheaton James a noted film and stage actor will star in the play. Celebrity fashion designer Bill Whitten, known for his creation for Diana Ross, Toni Braxton and Neil Diamond, to name a few



JAZZMUN

has designed the wardrobe and gowns for the production. The set will be created by Broadway stage designer and resident professor at the North Carolina School of the Arts, Charles McClennahan.

Producer Stanley Bennet Clay, Author of the novel Diva (Holloway House) has produced such award winning plays as Willie & Esther, Anna Lucasta, Children of the Night and Ritual (soon to be a motion picture). Ritual also written and directed by Stanley. Clay is also the publisher and editor in chief of SBC Magazine, the nations oldest continuously published monthly for the Black gay community.

Ask Any Girl will be performed through March 2nd, 1997. Tickets are on sale at Ticketmaster outlets including Blockbuster, Robinsons-May and Tower Records. Tickets may be charged by phone by calling 213-480-3242, 714-740-2000 or 619-220-TIXS. For more information you may contact Leland Galand at 213-733-5661.

Tri State Ski Trips

★★★★

-Chaz

On Jan. 24, 1997, brothers and sisters on the East Coast got together for a weekend of skiing, Bowling roller skating and partying. The event kicked off Friday night with a pajama party that lasted well into the morning. As the participants gathered together and talked about movies, music and books, In knew that the weekend would be a success.

A scene from the pajama party

Highlights of the weekend were the famous Cocktail Sip produced by U-Men U-Sweat, Skiing, Horseback Riding and a Saturday evening Dress to impress party that people are still talking about. The party featured a dance contest and a best outfit contest, but more importantly it gave us a chance to mingle.

Many of us used Sunday morning as an opportunity to talk about all of the things that went on the day before. I even got a chance to meet Seville Williams (Event coordinator for DC Gay Pride). I assured him that he should expect a large contingent from New York City an I know you guys aren't going to let me down.

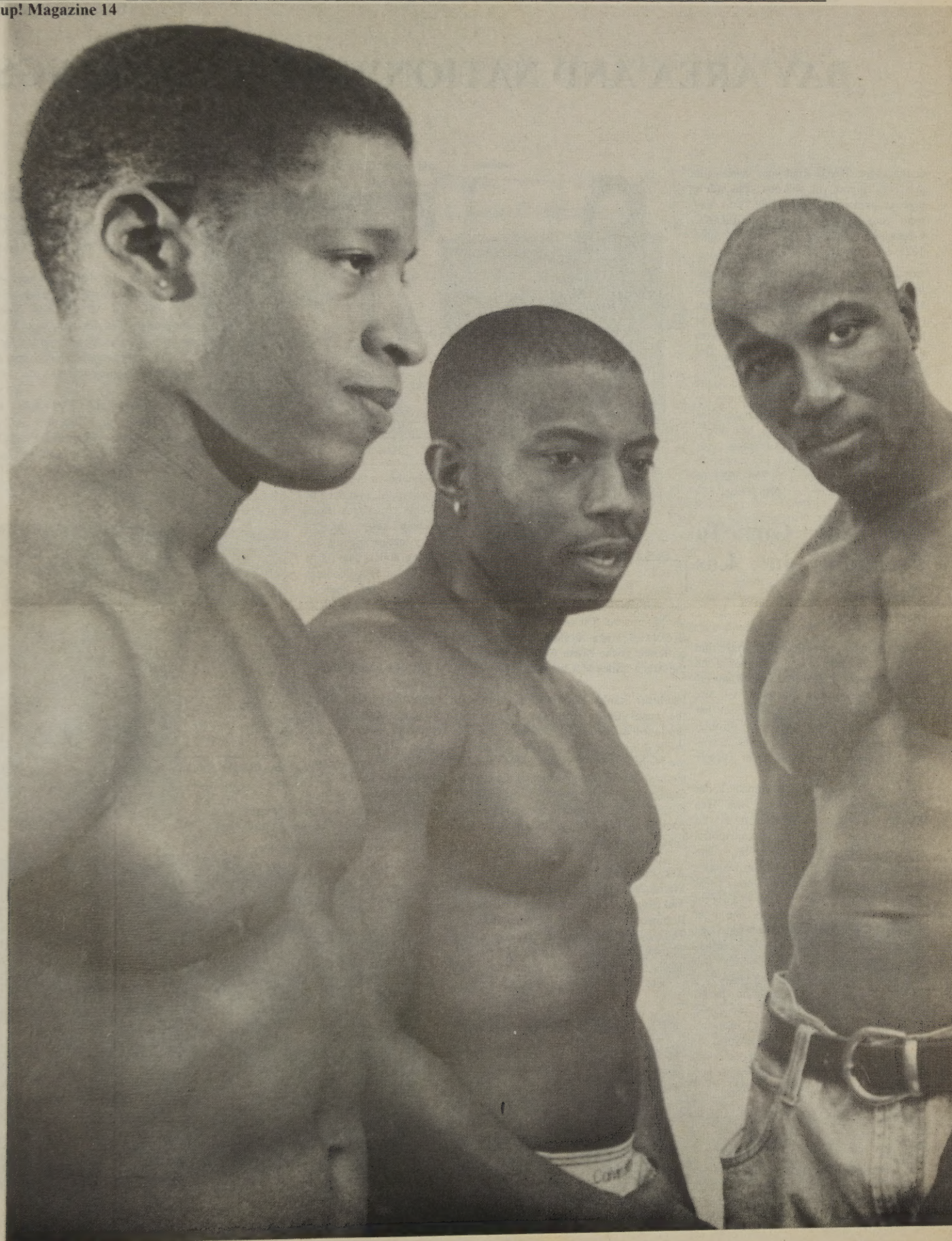
The time went by so fast. I realized that when it was time to go, I didn't want to. In the midst of hugs, kisses, and the exchange of phone numbers we said our goodbyes.

I would like to thank and recognize the event coordinators for the evolvement. Don from D.C., J.J. Mosely from New Jersey and James Saunders of New York City, you've made this the best ski trip for me yet. Check the Whazzup! Calender for future U-Men U-Sweat productions.

*Note **Skiers In The Life will be coordinating** An Affrocentric Ski Weekend at Lake Tahoe's Beautiful Northshore on Feb. 14-17, 1997. The event will be hosted by Louie Butler and Gerald For more info: Northern, CA 510-433-7105 Southern, CA 310-203-1507

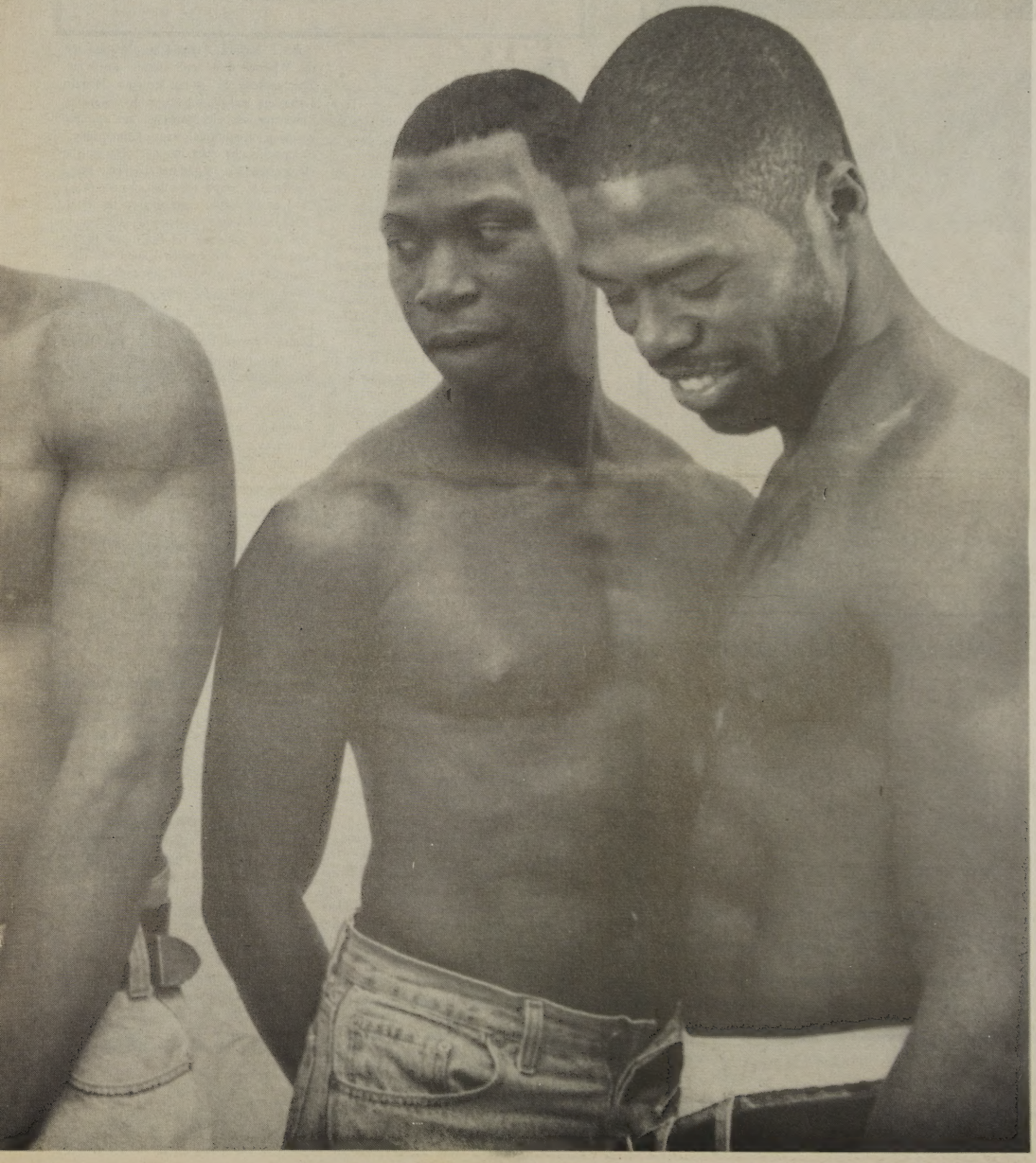
From left to right Don, James and J.T., event coordinators

Chaz on horseback



Photography by Valerie Phillips© 1997

The name Valerie Phillips is synonymous with the art of photography. Most known for her work in Washington, D.C. as a freelance photographer, she specializes in capturing the images of beautiful Black Men. Valerie says, "Art has always inspired me, I am drawn to unique and tasteful structures, shapes and forms. Valerie backs up her words with The Awesome Torch '97, a calendar that features twelve of D.C.'s most gorgeous Black Men.



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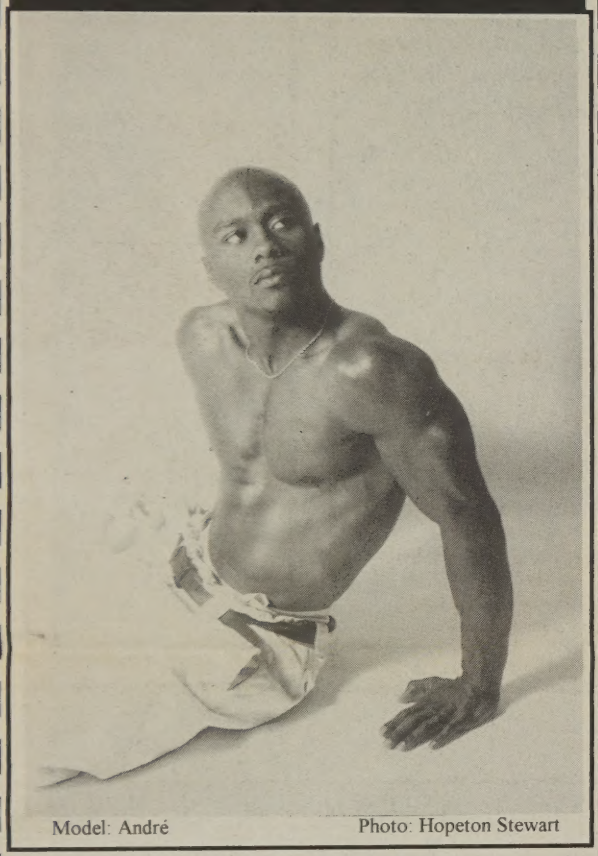

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Entertainment News

From the Electronic Urban Report (EUR)
http://www.EURweb.com

Angela Bassett has signed on to play the title role in Terry McMillan's "How Stella Got Her Groove Back." If everything goes as planned, the film will begin production in spring. So far, no one has been cast to play Winston, the young Jamaican lover who helped Stella get it back in the groove. An unknown actor may be cast in the part.

For other books coming to the big screen...**Oprah Winfrey** is set to star in and produce a feature film based on the Toni Morrison novel, "Beloved." It's the story of a slave who's haunted by the baby daughter she killed.

The family of **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** has signed a deal with Warner Books to produce the first complete collection of the civil rights leader's writings, speeches and sermons. The deal, said to be worth MILLIONS of dollars, will comprise seven works, including an autobiography of King compiled from writing in his own words, an Internet site and a CD Rom. King's widow, **Coretta Scott King** and son Dexter will write the books. There will also be a books of King's sermons and recordings of speeches.

Arsenio Hall returns to television (ABC-TV) March 5 with his own not-yet-titled sitcom, co-starring "Set It Off's" **Vivica Fox**. The show, which will take over "Ellen's" 9:30 Wednesday night slot, is being described as a cross between "**The Cosby Show**" and "**Madd About You.**" We'll have more on the show, and comments from Hall and Fox, in an upcoming EUR. But, we hear that **Ellen DeGeneres**, The star of "Ellen" isn't too happy about the move. She reportedly showed her displeasure by walking off the set last Thursday.

Salt-N-Pepa DJ Spinderella has opened a beauty parlor in Queens, New York. The salon offers hair and nail care, as well as spa amenities, a staff psychologist and Spinderlla's own line of beauty products called "Ascend." A portion of the profits will be donated to women's charities. In March, she, Salt and Pepa will be back with a new CD.

"Moesha" star **Brandy** begins her freshman year at Pepperdine University this week. But she's not the only star on the Malibu campus. **"Sister Sister"** stars **Tia** and **Tamara Mowry** also attend the college.

After 5 seasons, **Tisha Campbell** has left the "Martin" show and lawsuits are flying. The actress is suing co-star **Martin Lawrence** and the show's producers saying Lawrence sexually harassed her and the working conditions were "intolerable." Campbell's character has not been on the show since Dec. 19 and her absence is being explained by having the other characters go on a cruise while Gina missed the boat. HBO Independent Productions (the people who make the show for Fox) have filed a restraining order against Campbell. They want her to work until some decision is made regarding her lawsuit. Lawrence's publicist issued a statement saying Lawrence is "being used as pawn in a contract dispute between Tisha and HBO." The statement also claims Lawrence has been Campbell's "champion and protector" and is "deeply hurt" by the allegations. Campbell's lawyer's fired back with a statement of the their own calling Lawrence's claims of a contract statement "untrue." The statement went on to say that Campbell's contract with HBO was agreed to "quickly and amicably" prior to the current season.

Campbell's lawsuit details problems for each of the five seasons the show has been on, Lawrence repeatedly asked her out during the first season of the show and she declined. After that, according to her suit, he became abusive --flying into unexplained fits of rage, humiliating her in front of the cast and crew. Campbell accuses Lawrence of groping her, kissing her -- forcing his tongue into her mouth and simulating intercourse with her -- when they were not rehearsing scenes. Campbell is also suing HBO Productions saying she made them aware of the situation, but the executives in charge did nothing.

On a related note, **Orlando Jones**, star of the Fox's "Mad TV," told Los Angeles' "Daily News" that Lawrence really isn't the easiest guy to work with. Jones, who worked as a writer on the "Martin" pilot, said he and other staff writers had planned to eliminate Lawrence's side characters (Roscoe, Momma Payne, Sheneneh...). Lawrence burst into a meeting "in full Sheneneh gear to cuss us out." Jones says the comic told the crew that if his characters were out -- then he was out too. After that, Jones decided it was time for HIM to get out. (Tisha, obviously, should have bailed too!)

Entertainment News

From the Electronic Urban Report (EUR)
http://www.EURweb.com

THE 28TH NAACP IMAGE AWARDS

The **Fugees** and **Toni Braxton** walked away with four nominations each for the upcoming NAACP Image Awards. **Maxwell** earned three nominations for his "Urban Hang Suite" and **The Artist Formerly Known as Prince** got three nods for his "Emancipation" CD. On hand to announce the awards were **Yolanda King, Dick Gregory, LeVar Burton** and **Erika Alexander.**

In the category of Best Actor: **Cuba Gooding, Jr., Denzel Washington, Eddie Murphy, Ossie Davis** and **Samuel L. Jackson.**

For Best Actress: **Jada Pinkett, Queen Latifah, Whitney Houston** and **Whoopi Goldberg.**

For Outstanding Motion Picture: A Time to Kill, Courage Under Fire, Get on the Bus, Once Upon a Time...When We Were Colored, The Preacher's Wife.

In other Image Award news, **Denzel Washington** will also be honored as The Entertainer of the Year. The show will be taped on February 7th and 8th in Hollywood and Pasadena. **Arsenio Hall** and **Patti LaBelle** will co-host the show which will air on February 27th at 8 p.m. on the Fox Network.

THE GRAMMYS

Babyface walked away with 12 Grammy nominations. That ties the record set by **Michael Jackson** in 1983. Face landed multiple nominations for the "Waiting to Exhale" soundtrack as well as for his production work on **Eric Clapton's** "Change the World." Other multiple nominees were **Clapton, Celine Dion, The Tony Rich Project,** producer **David Foster, Pierre Boulez** earned 4 Grammy nominations each. **Tracy Chapman** was nominated for Record of the Year for "Give Me One Reason." The "Waiting to Exhale" soundtrack was nominated for Album of the Year. "Exhale Shoop, Shoop" and "Give Me One Reason" were nominated for Song of The Year. **Toni Braxton** earned a nomination in the Female Pop Vocal Performance category. **Tony Rich** earned a nod for Male Pop Vocal as well as New Artist.

Here's rundown of the R&B and Rap categories:

BEST FEMALE R&B VOCAL PERFORMANCE:
Not Gon' Cry -- Mary J. Blige, Sittin' Up in My Room -- Brandy, You're Makin' Me High --Toni Braxton, Exhale -- Whitney Houston

BEST MALE R&B VOCAL PERFORMANCE:
Lady - D'Angelo, A Change is Gonna Come - Al Green, New World Order - Curtis Mayfield, Like a Woman - The Tony Rich Project, Your Secret Love - Luther Vandross

BEST R&B PERFORMANCE BY A DUO OR GROUP:
Slow Jams - Babyface & Tamia With Portrait & Barry White, Stomp - Luke Cresswell, Fiona Wilkes, Carl Smith, Fraser Morrison, Everett Bradley, Mr. X, Melle Mel, Coolio, Yo-Yo, Chaka Khan, Charlie Wilson, Shaquille O'Neal & The Luniz, Don't Let Go (Love) - En Vogue, Killing Me Softly With His Song - Fugees, Never Miss the Water - Chaka Khan featuring MeShell Ndegeocello

BEST R&B ALBUM:
Moving On - Oleta Adams, Maxwell's Urban Hang Suite - Maxwell, New World Order - Curtis Mayfield, Peace Beyond Passion - Me'Shell Ndegeocello, Words - The Tony Rich Project

BEST RAP SOLO:
Woo-Hah!! Got You All In Check - Busta Rhymes, 1,2,3,4 (Sumpin New) - Coolio, Rock With You - Heavy D, Hey Lover -- LL Cool J, If I Ruled the World - NAS

BEST RAP PERFORMANCE BY A DUO OR GROUP:
Tha Crossroads - Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, Champagne - Salt-N-Pepa, 1nce Again - A Tribe Called Quest, California Love - 2Pac featuring Dr. Dre and Roger Troutman, How Do U Want It - 2Pac featuring Jojo and K-Ci

RAP ALBUM:
Gangstas Paradise - Coolio, The Score - the Fugees, Mr. Smith - LL Cool J, Beats, Rhymes and Life - A Tribe Called Quest, All Eyez On Me - 2Pac

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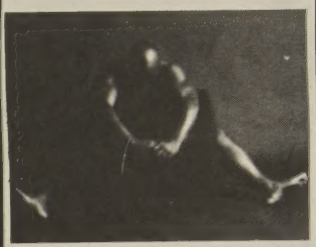

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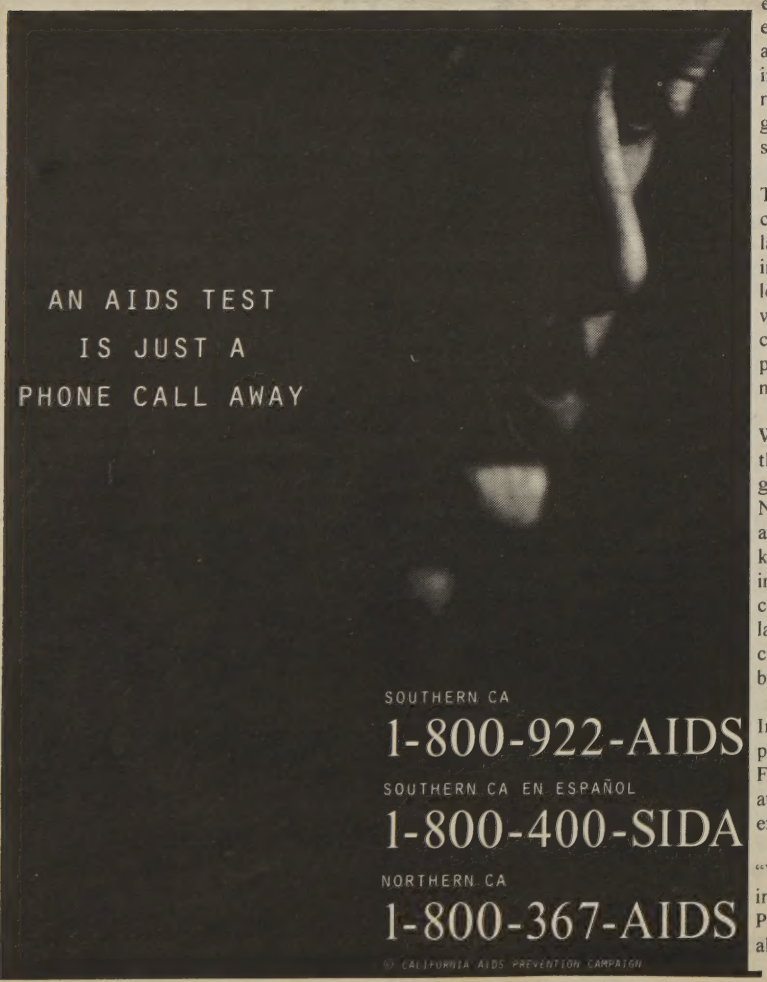

Photo:
Left, NTFAP Board President H. Alexander Robinson
Right, SF Mayor Willie Brown

NTFAP Launches Recreating Our Future

-San Francisco

In response to the escalating HIV infection rates in people of color communities, the national Task Force on AIDS Prevention (NTFAP) has announced the launching of a new national campaign to end the AIDS epidemic by the year 2002. The campaign, entitled Recreating Our Future, takes an aggressive approach to ending HIV infection among gay men of color. A reception was held in San Francisco to garner public, organizational and financial support for the campaign's five year plan.

The campaigns plan of action includes convening research experts to integrate the latest research findings into community intervention programs; conducting leadership training institutes for frontline workers; developing social marketing campaigns; and promoting public health policies which insure the inclusion of gay men of color in HIV related issues.

We are fighting for our very lives, and for the lives of our current and future generations." exclaimed Reggie Williams, NTFAP Founding Executive Director. "As a Black gay man living with HIV disease, I know the value of culturally appropriate interventions designed by and for people of color. That is why I am participating in the launch and ongoing activities of this critically important initiative. All of us must be involved."

In addition to Mr. Williams' active participation in the reception activities, San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown also attended the event to lend his support in the effort.

"We are blesses with Mr. Williams' involvement," remarked NTFAP Board President, H. Alexander Robinson, who is also a member of President Clinton's Advisory Council on AIDS. " His vision and passion are vital links in the success of recreating our future. We must take a public stand against the further spread of HIV among gay men of color.

"We are faced with many obstacles," added Robinson. " Malaise is building in communities of color. Expectations are rising that HIV is becoming inescapable and inevitable. Growing media coverage of new 'miracle' anti-AIDS drugs is fueling the speculation the epidemic is soon coming to an end. And many in the public and private sectors are experiencing AIDS burnout."

If we react to what we hope will happen rather than responding to what we currently know is true," Williams remarked, "then we may be condemning a whole new generation to life with this disease. We must re-energize, re-double, and recreate our efforts in ending this pandemic."

The NTAFP, a national people of color HIV/AIDS advocacy organization since 1988, cites statistics from the Center for Disease control and Prevention that gay men of color count for 52% of all AIDS cases in communities of color. Rates of HIV transmission over a five-year period show a 79% increase for African Americans, 77% increase for Native Americans, 61% increase for Latinos, and a 55% increase for Asian/Pacific Islanders.

The NTFAP is dedicated to ending the AIDS epidemic by advocating for the creation of programs by and for people of color. A major portion of the NTFAP target gay men of color. NTFAP local programs in San Francisco include the Brother's Network, the Native American AIDS Project, Proyecto ContraSIDA Por Vida, and the PLUS Program.

DON'T LET HIV/AIDS
BREAK UP YOUR CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

WARNING! HAVING SEX WITHOUT A LATEX CONDOM CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH!

TOGETHER WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL.
IN YOUR CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, DO YOU KNOW WHO IS POSITIVE?
IF ONE OF YOUR BOYS TESTED HIV POSITIVE WOULD HE STILL BE IN YOUR CIRCLE OF FRIENDS?

DON'T LET HIV BREAK UP YOUR FRIENDSHIP. AIDS IS THE NUMBER ONE KILLER OF BLACK MEN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 24-44.

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KNOW THE FACTS, GET TESTED FOR HIV.

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This project was financially supported by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, our private and corporate donors, and The Alameda County Office of AIDS Administration.

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Shakespeare and all his antics had much to say concerning the relationships of women and mankind. It is for this reason that I have choosen his literature to be the theme for this months column. For there have been no greater trials or tribulations among the stars than understanding there relationships between one another. So it might be to your advantage to learn more about Shakespeare yourself. Take a good look at it from the viewpoint of the stars, the stars that are bright for all to see.

♈ **Aries**: As the month of February unfolds, I am reminded of the Shakespearean Play of Henry the Eighth and the birth of Queen Elizabeth. It seemed as though from her birth the young child Elizabeth was standing at the center of universe. She was a solemn child dressed like a miniature adult. She never felt much freedom because her whole life was given to the land that bred her. She took it and made it her love and her companion.

Well my beloved Queen Aries, although this could be a time of promise, energy and deserved success, the issues of love are another matter and should not take priority at this time in your picture of what success means to you. Yes it is true that relationships indeed have their place for you in this month, but if you walk into a wall without looking where you are going its won't be the fault of the wall. Keep your priorities in order and everything else will be in proper perspective.

♉ **Taurus:** Your horoscope has a close resemblance to Shakespeare's play "Henry the Fifth" It embarks upon three men who sold there honor for money. They are Richard Earl of Cambridge, Henry Lord Scroop of Macham and Thomas Grey, Knight of Northumberland. King Henry intends to reclaim his ancestral lands from France, and the battle of Agrin court will be a decisive moment. The scene is shown in the stateroom of Henry's flagship. On the table lie the broken swords of the three traitors, with Henry's own sword lying across them.

Dear noteworthy King Henry the Taurus, in setting your friendships in good standing for the coming days ahead, it would do well for you to get your house in order and not be to quick to call and consider everyone as a friend. Otherwise it could be financial ruin, the loss of a reputation, or even unwarranted action taken against you. Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing.

♊ **Gemini:** The play that Shakespeare wrote called "King Lear" has a great likeness to your situation in life this month. King Lear was the King of Ancient Britain, he had three daughters, Regan, Goneril, and the youngest Cordelia, her fathers favorite child. Being old, Lear decides to divide his kingdom between the three women. However, he proposes to divide it according to how much they love him. Regan and Goneril profess to adore him and get their portions, Cordelia tells him she loves him as much as he deserves. Lear in a fit of temper disowns her, leaving her dowerless, but the King of France takes her as his wife, loving her for her gentleness and beauty more. She ends up receiving more than the portion that would have been hers if she would have aimed to please her father.

Now here this, King Lear the Gemini. This is a time to visit your immediate family out of love and support for them, without expecting anything in return. It will represent wisdom gained through experience. Indeed this will provide you with great revelations and a better understanding for dealing with women. And what more significant place than from your own female family members.

♋ **Cancer:** Cancer: It is Shakespeare's play known as "Hamlet" that cast a resemblance to the drama of your life this month. The play opens with the appearance of the ghost's of Hamlets father to the soldiers on watch. They summon Horatio and beg him to tell Hamlet of this strange turn of events. The prince questions his dead father and learns that he was murdered by his own brother who has now seized the throne and married the widowed queen. Enraged, Hamlet vows revenge upon his uncle.

In order to fulfill his vow Hamlet pretends madness. Which while acting in despair, he plans to force the king to confess. He uses as a ploy, a troupe of traveling players to enact the murder as a play.

Dear Prince Hamlet the Cancer. Since revenge is truly never sweet, maybe instead this might represent a time which you are called upon to make some great changes in your life, in your beliefs, and the way you live your life. Being called upon to give something up in order that something better may be gained maybe what is in order for this month.

♌ **Leo:** The Shakespearean play that you are akin to this month is the story of "Richard the Third". In the play itself Richard is presented as the personification of evil. A murderer and a poisoner, guilty of killing his own nephews, his brother, and even his own wife. Most modern historians will agree that Richard the Third was not as black and white as he was painted by the Tudor opposition. Also the other character Henry the Seventh had to at least appear to be the 'good guy', but when you take the time to look at the facts it is pretty obvious who stood to gain most by the death of the princes in the tower. The same man who wed their sister to make his claim to the throne more acceptable to the common people. Shakespeare, however was not disillusioned as to who was ruling England in his time...Elizabeth Tuder, the granddaughter of Henry the Seventh! This being the case it would not have been a good idea to do anything other than make Richard the Third the villain.

Great Richard the lion, it is not wise for you to feel sorry for yourself by creating a killing anxiety for you and those around you. Nothing ever ends, there can be no end, only change. Transmutation is the better term. Look for changes and renewal of old ideas. This will most assuredly be a time of your greatest growth. That is, if you allow it to be.

♍ **Virgo:** Your sign this month is quoted to appear like one of Shakespeare's most famous plays known as "Cleopatra". The play concerns a time after the death of Julius Ceaser when Marc Anthony has fallen under the spell of the Egyptian Queen. Although one of the three most powerful men in Rome, he spends his time in her company and forgets about his duties. However he is finally recalled to Rome and there marries the sister of Octavius. Inevitably, he returns to Egypt and there becomes the general of Cleopatra's armies, leading them back against Octavius at Actium.

Beloved Cleopatra the Virgo, learning to control your passions until there appointed time is a trick that even Houdini would have a tough time mastering. But in the moment of becoming something far greater than you have already been, you would gain most by keeping still, having patience, and putting your needs before your wants. This will manifest appreciable things in your near future. There is power in stillness and silence

♎ **Libra:** The month of February for you is as mysterious as the play written by Shakespeare known as "Pericles, Prince of Tyre". The prince is visiting Antioch, where he becomes privy to a dark secret concerning the King. Knowing that his life is in danger, Pericles leaves his City , and entrust a friend to govern in his place as he sets sails to a far-off land. His ship is wrecked and he is cast ashore in Pentapolis where he eventually wins the hand of the King's daughter Thaisa. News comes to him that his enemy is dead and he may return to Tyre and the couple set sail. A storm at sea causes Thaisa to give birth prematurely to a daughter, then she falls into a death-like trance. The superstitious sailors object to a dead body aboard and insist it is thrown overboard. The coffin drifts to the shores of Ephesus and there Thaisa is revived and becomes a priestess in the great temple of Diana.

Well Prince of Tyre or High Priestess Thaisa which ever side of the Libran scales you happen to be on; It would seem as though checking your motives in all that you do would be appropriate for you this month. Also it is highly recommended that you avoid gossip of all kinds at all cost, especially in the work place. Keep in mind that the sword of Judgement is double-edged and cuts on both sides.

♏ **Scorpio:** The temperament for your sign this month is likened to the Shakespearean play titled "Much Ado About Nothing". He never gave us a more enchanting heroine than Beatrice. Fiery and winsome, she is determined not to give in to the handsome but acid-tongued Benedick and derails him any chance that she gets. Her sharp words and almost modern views make her like a futuristic Betty Davis. Although the main story line concerns the romance of Hero and Claudio, most of the time it is Beatrice and Benedick that concerns us. Briefly then, Hero is to wed Claudio, but one of her admirers arranges that her maid, dressed in her mistress's clothes, shows herself at the bedroom window, seemingly letting in a lover. Outraged, Claudio calls off the wedding, implying that Hero is no longer the chaste maid he thought he was getting! No one thinks to ask Claudio if the pot is calling the kettle black.

Well Scorpion or in some other text books Sir eagle, this time for you is very apropos to the play "Much Ado About Nothing". Be very leery of leading others on and manipulation. In order to create lasting productivity it is a requirement to, weigh things out realistically without making hasty decisions. Remember when you don't know what to do, don't do anything until further notice.

♐ **Sagittarius:**
Although it was very difficult to match you up this month with an appropriate play, I finally managed to cease the day with the play "Two Gentlemen of Verona. The basic theme is somewhat of a mangled triangle with Valentine and Proteus, the two gentlemen of the title visiting Milan where they both fall in love with the same woman, Silvia. Unfortunately, Silvia is already with a third man, Thurio. From here on in it gets even more complicated as the former sweetheart of Proteus has followed him to Milan disguised as a man. Shakespeare showed a marked empathy for dressing his women up in men's clothing, probably because at that time it was customary for young boys to play female parts as well. As all is fair in love and war, Proteus gets Valentine banished forcing him to become the leader of a band of forest brigands that eventually kidnaps Silvia. And so on and so on.

Yes my Shakespearean Sag, you can at times make life more complicated for yourself than it has to be. Also maybe if you remember what you've learned over the years through trial and error you wont move so quickly. Then at least you wont make as many mistakes. If you beat yourself up a lot over things and fight with yourself, it's a losing battle. The quote for you this month should be, "Keep it Simple".

♑ **Capricorn:** The height of drama for you this month has a great resemblance to Shakespeare's play "The Merchant of Venice". The story tells us about a merchant by name of Antonio who borrows money from Shylock to enable his friend Bassanio to court and finally marry Portia. The loan is secured against the return of Shylocks cargo-carrying ships. These ships are delayed and the loan falls due with Antonio unable to pay. Shylock demands the forfeit agreed upon, namely, a pound of flesh from Antonio's breast. Horrified, Bassanio hurries home to tell Portia and she, with her maid devise a plan to get her beloved out this seemingly catastrophic mess.

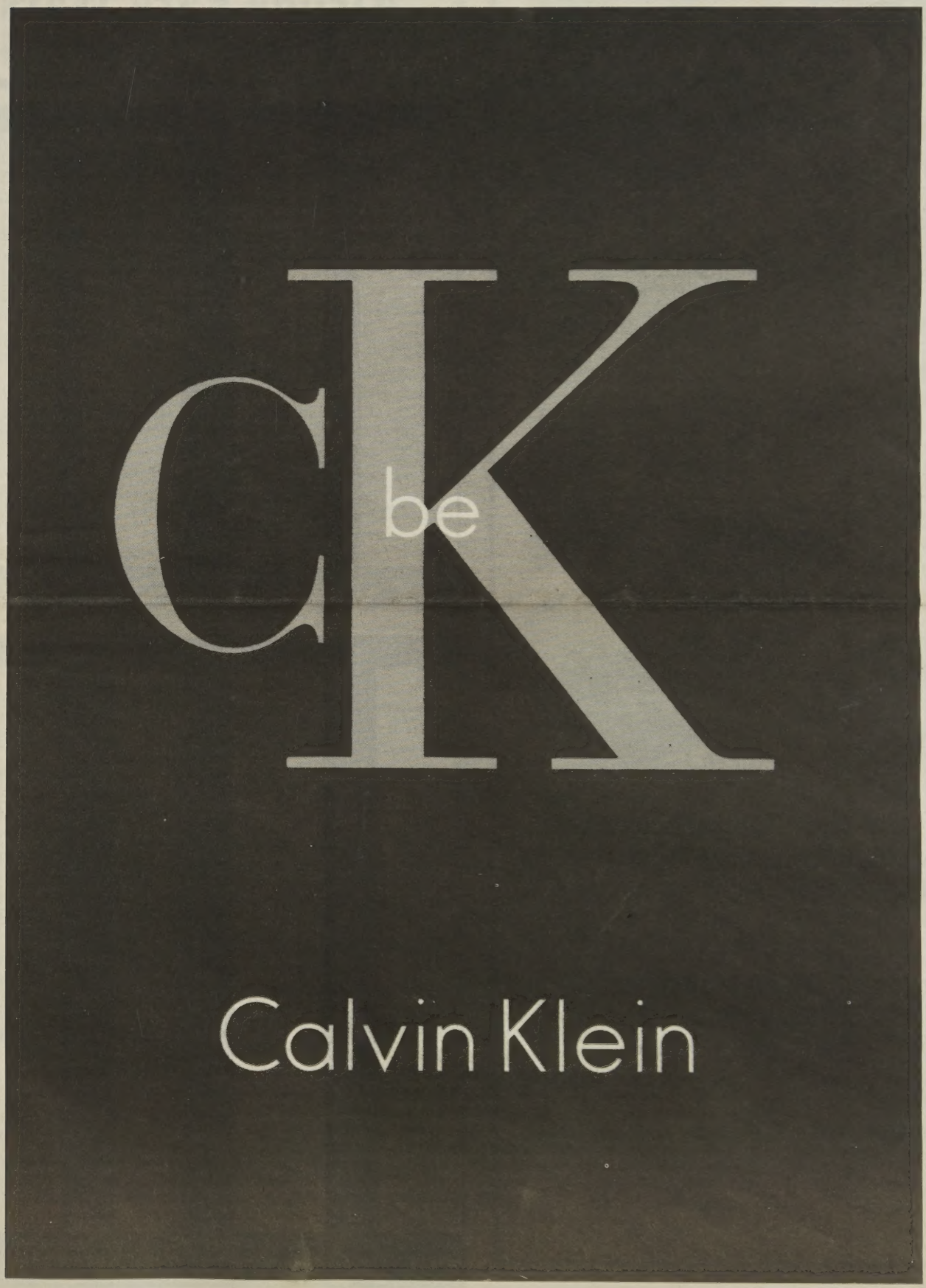
My dear Merchant the Capricorn, money, loans and all that goes with paper works doesn't seem to fair very well for you at this time . Better budget planning and not spending beyond your means might be called for. When all else fails, hope, prayer, and patience is always the best antidote. Yes indeed, money may be tight but help is on the way. The spirit works in strange and miraculous ways, just hold on little bit longer.

♒ **Aquarius:** And great greetings to you my Aquarian friend because your sign truly tops it off this month with the similarity of the inspiringly famous Shakespearean play by name of, "Julius Ceaser". The characters are marvelous, the poisonously envious Casca and Cassius, the noble Brutus, the cunning savvy Marc Anthony, as well as the minor parts of Calpurnia and Portia. It begins with Ceaser, having refused the crown, is warned by his wife who dreams of his death, and by the Soothsayer who warns him against the "Ides of March". He brushes both warnings aside and meets his death at the hands, and daggers, of his 'friends'. The speech given over his body by Marc Anthony is one of the most stirring and passionate speeches devised by Shakespeare and has been quoted and re-quoted by many.

Hail great Ceaser the Aquarian. You would serve yourself well by trusting your intuition on things a bit more. Also for the record, good advise is hard to come by, so get out of your own ego-centered way and listen to what others have to say. No kingdom was ever run by one person alone. So by all means keep in mind that self-centeredness has fear as its constant companion.

♓ **Pisces:** Your sign this month has the uncanny resemblance to one of Shakespeare's most familiar plays, "Romeo and Juliet". The play is so well known that it needs no real telling. But just in case... The scene is in Verona where two noble families live, the Montagues and the Capulets, who have long been feuding with one another. At a Capulet ball some of the Montagues attend it disguised, and among them is Romeo, son of the Montegues. It is here that he meets with Juliet the daughter of the Capulets. They meet later secretly that night - he in the garden and she on the balcony of her room. After confessing there mutual love they arrange to meet in the morning to be married.

Well Piscean lover, when it comes to making commitments you should make very sure that you have taken everything into account. Otherwise the results could be disastrous. Compromise is your key word this month and negotiate is your other word. All may be fair in love and war but remember," All wars have casualties" so don't write a check that your ass can't cash.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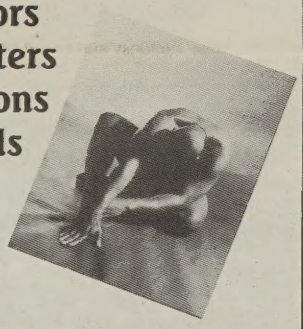

For more information call
Whazzup! Magazine (510) 836-4759
E-mail: Whazzup411@aol.com

or write to:
Whazzup! Magazine
2501 Ivy Suite 19
Oakland, CA 94606

Models: Deahanna Wallace & Stephen Johnson Photos: Hopeton Stewart

Airline Fare Wars

Continued from page 11

Domestic Fares

MARKET	AIRLINES	FARE BASIS	AMOUNT
Oak/SFO to New York	Most	7-21 Day	$238-328
Oak/SFO to Atlanta	Most	3-21 Day	$228-318
Oak/SFO to Chicago	Most	7-21 Day	$198-328
Oak/SFO to Washington, DC	Most	7-21 Day	$178-378
Oak/SFO to Baltimore	Most	7-21 Day	$268-308
Oak/SFO to Los Angeles	Most	7-21 Day	$88-166
Oak/SFO to Phoenix	Most	7-21 Day	$78-136
Oak/SFO to Las Vegas	Most	7 Day	$88-200
Oak/SFO to New Orleans	Most	7-21 Day	$378-400
Oak/SFO to Denver	Most	7-21 Day	$148-228

These are round-trip fares, non-refundable, subject to availability and do not include taxes; PFC's and certain stay-over requirements do exist

International Travel

MARKET	AIRLINES	FARE BASIS	AMOUNT
SFO to London	British Airways	*	$199.00
SFO to Paris	"	*	$249.00
SFO to Amsterdam	"	*	$255.00
SFO to Barcelona	"	*	$255.00
SFO to Berlin	"	*	$265.00
SFO to Capetown	"	*	$695.00
SFO to Frankfurt	"	*	$265.00
SFO to Lisbon	"	*	$243.00
SFO to Manila	"	*	$625.00
SFO to Rome	"	*	$286.00
SFO to Singapore	"	*	$571.00
SFO to Moscow	"	*	$301.00
SFO to Seoul	"	*	$612.00
SFO to Tele Aviv	"	*	$347.00
SFO to Madrid	"	*	$255.00
SFO to Zurich	"	*	$269.00

These are one-way fares based on round trip purchase. Fares are economy class, and non-refundable. Subject to availability, government approval and do not include government charges of up to $81. The sales are commence January 13, 1997 through February 28, 1997. Weekend surcharges, blackout dates and significant restrictions apply.

Choice: A cruel deception

-We Are Family

One of the most commonly misused terms in the public monologue on homosexuality is the word *choice*. Often this word is preceded by the adjective *sinful*.

The word choice means option and implies the privilege of choosing freely. We have yet to meet a gay person who has felt that he or she had made a choice to be homosexual. These are some simple thoughts that we can all benefit:

The first is to ask why even a few individuals, much less millions and millions, would voluntarily adopt a pattern of behavior virtually certain to subject them to scorn, ridicule, discrimination and the threat of physical violence and which furthermore would most likely limit their opportunities to lead productive and rewarding lives. This is a demonstrable historical pattern of some members of other discriminated groups that are in power, but not the reverse. Every closeted homosexual is in effect trying to do just that, to hide in the world of straight people so as to avoid the penalties that society applies to gay people.

For significant portions of their lives most homosexuals have diligently tried to adopt the behavioral patterns of heterosexuals avoiding the treatment they experience when their true sexual orientation becomes known. Most of us will choose the easier, more comfortable path when we have a free choice. Can we honestly believe that millions of homosexuals have done just the opposite?

Second, most homosexuals know that they are different in some fundamental way at a very early age, long before they are even aware of what "sexuality" is and before they are capable of even considering making any fundamental choices about any life long aspects of their behavior. Many have been subjected to scorn or cruel treatment by other children and adults from early childhood because the are somehow different. Our experience has been that a significant proportion of parents of gay children knew or feared that something was "amiss" long before they had to address the reality of their child's sexual orientation. Can we logically assert that small children even "make a choice" and should they be condemned for what some assume to be a choice?

Whether the innate difference between homosexuals and heterosexuals is a result of genetic predisposition, pre-natal influences or early experience is largely moot. Does it affect the reality of the situation whether a baby with one arm got that way because of genetic abnormality, an in-utero accident or an accident shortly after birth? Do we love that child any less because of our assessment of how she got to be the way she is?

Stories about gay people who have tried to change their orientation through prayer, self-discipline or therapeutic treatment are legion. There have been few, if any, successful long-term changes. The ability of most homosexuals to choose their life-style is no more realistic than is the ability of those of us born with a heterosexual orientation to choose to be homosexual.

One of our founders says: "I learned a lot when I imagined myself transported to another society where the religious and social norm was to act a homosexual and where the leaders demanded that I be either celibate or adopt a homosexual lifestyle. There may be a small proportion of the population, including some with strong religious calling, who might successfully choose celibacy, but for me and for most of us a choice to behave contrary to our essential natures is bound to end in failure. I realized that in such a society I would be a closet heterosexual, sneaking around seeking release for the nature which is me"

Jelousy and Lasalle at San Francisco Gay Pride '93

The dream: To be able to live, love and celebrate being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, with pride, wherever we are

Homophobia is an issue that many of us can and do avoid facing, but it affects every one of us, whether we want it or not.

We are family is a non-profit educational corporation which has been started by a group of people with gay relatives and friends who have, as a result, looked more closely at the reality of homosexuality. We could no longer avoid addressing this issue because it left us with but one alternative, to turn away from people we love. We found that to be an intolerable choice. The result has been healthy, positive relationships with people we might otherwise have lost.

Mission Statement: To produce and distribute educational resources which inspire society to manifest our own vision. To work by all means possible for the acceptance of gays and lesbians as full members of our society. To focus particularly on the plight of gay and lesbian children who often have nowhere to turn for advice and support.For more information or to help contact:

We Are Family Foundation
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THE EVOLUTION OF THE REPRESENTATION OF AFRICA(NS) IN MASS MEDIA AND CINEMA

-Kheven Lagrone

Before 1800, accounts of Africa were relatively objective when compared to later periods. The expansion of the slave trade meant that Europeans had to have some knowledge of both the Africans they were doing business with and the people that were commodities. As an example of the objectivity during this period, Patrick Brantlinger tells us about a writer who condemned the Ashanti practice of ritual human sacrifice, but he did not treat that aspect of their culture as representative of the whole, nor did he allow it to interfere with his appreciation for other Ashanti customs, arts, and institutions.

From the 1790s to 1840s, abolitionist propaganda became the most influential writing about Africa. The anti-slavery writing revealed the atrocities of slavery. The writing detailed the cruelties of slavery in Africa, the West Indies, the American South and the middle passage. Though the Africans were depicted as innocent savages, the anti-slavery writers believed the Africans didn't need European salvation.

In 1833, slavery was outlawed in all British territories. The British began to see themselves as the potential saviors of Africans. Now, the blame for slavery shifted to the Americans and then to the Africans themselves. The media reflected the shift. For example, in 1840, Thomas Buxton, the leader of the British the anti-slavery movement, wrote-"The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy." He writes that Africans must produce something other than slaves and that the British would teach them Christianity and industry. He writes that human sacrifice is the essence of African culture. He even writes that slavery and savagery disrupts Africa's chances for civilization and salvation. African barbarity can only be counteracted by Christian civilization.

The first step in saving Africa was the Niger Expedition of 1841. Malaria fell most of the participants. Forty-one people died. So now, in addition to being seen as a place of barbarity, Africa became a place of death and disease as well. Many British begin writing that Africa was not fit for civilization and should be left in the dark.

Meanwhile, slavery remained an issue when the British wrote about Africa. The Africans were vilified for their slave trade. Though Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin was popular in England, after the Civil War, the media began to make slavery look like an extension of African savagery.

In the late 1850s, armed with quinine to fight malaria, British explorers began the 'opening-up' of Africa. The British were excited about the expedition. They were eager for the explorers' accounts of their adventure. Brantlinger writes, "As headline, best-selling reading, the penetration of Africa provided a narrative fascination that has been likened to excitement about space exploration today". Explorer David Living stone's "Missionary Travels" not only made him rich and famous, he became a national hero.
In those stories, the explorer recounts going into the "dark" of Africa in search of the Nile source or to convert savages. Before this point, the British addressed the people when discussing Africa. Now, we find more of the Fauna-Flora-Animals-People (FCAP.) model of hierarchy of depicting Africa. Here the explorer described braving lands either enchanted or bedeviled. He must avoid deadly disease. He encounters wild animals. He comes face-to face with bewitched or demonic savages. The explorer does not portray the "savages" as fellow human beings. They are usually depicted as nameless and faceless obstacles or curiosities. They are perceived to be either dangerous or amusing.

Missionaries also went to the so-called Dark Continent and brought back sensational stories of pitiful creatures who need to be shown the light. According to Brantlinger. ". . . missionaries were strongly tempted to exaggerate savagery and darkness in order to rationalize their presence in Africa, to explain the frustrations they experienced in making converts and to win support from mission societies at home".

Based on the missionaries and explorers stories, the British debated whether or not Africans could be redeemed for civilization.

In the 1860s, scientific writings and public debates supported the stereotypes of the missionaries and explorers. Were Africans human? Are Africans human, but lower on the evolutionary scale, and therefore inferior to the Europeans? The theories supported imperialism. (Theories even evolved that supported genocide.)

In the 1860s, fiction writers began imitating the explorers and writing stories with white heroes penetrating the Dark Continent. There were romantic stories and boys adventure stories. Some of the stories, including one by explorer Henry Stanley, had abolitionist themes.

Such images of Africa continued into the next century. By the time of the Berlin Conference of 1884, the British tended to see Africa as a center of evil, a part of the world possessed by a demonic darkness or barbarism, represented above all by slavery and cannibalism, which it was their duty to exorcize.

When Hollywood began making African adventure movies, they perpetuated this image of Africa. Perhaps Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle, is the best known. The setting is a beautiful, but possibly dangerous jungle. When other white men explore Africa, they run the risk of quicksand, hungry lions and headhunters (perpetuating the FFAP model of hierarchy). Tarzan communicates with animals and the faceless and nameless primitives.

Africa in the Media Today:

From the writings of late 19-century negritude movement, the nationalistic writers of the independence movements to today's African film makers, the Africans themselves have made little impact on their image in the white media. The news of the wars of independence were written and broadcast by a Eurocentric media. Movies like "Born Free" and "Out of Africa" show a beautiful savanna/jungle with wild animals and marginalized people (perpetuating the FFAP hierarchy of depicting Africa as well as the image of the white savior). Since few Americans will ever see Africa for themselves, these images become "facts". In particular, the news has a very powerful role since the public believes it to be fair and objective.

But according to Beverly G. Hawk, true Africa is marginalized because America is more interested in its coups, wars, famines and disease. She writes:

"What is marketed to us as news from Africa is actually news created by Americans to the shape of an image Americans currently hold. The metaphor in which correspondents frame their stories and, indeed, the selection of the stories themselves tell us more about America than they do about Africa ."

America believes Africa is in violent turmoil (savage), wrecked by disease (i.e., AIDS) and poverty. Like the British in the 19th century, America believes Africa is backwards and without our intervention it will remain backwards. But the intervention this time is not religion, but economic and technologic. Even the shift away from religious intervention reflects more on America itself--as a country, we have become less religious ourselves.

Understanding events in Africa requires more information than a newstory normally gives. For example an October 26, 1996, Washington Times story titled "Zairian Tutsis Taking Up Arms in Self-Defense: Vow To Prevent Rwanda-Style Genocide", we read that the "Hutus are the largest ethnic group in both Rwanda and Burundi, although the minority Tutsis are currently in control of both countries' government."

One can take this story to mean the savages are fighting again. But if we are more knowledgeable of African history, we'd have questions. How did the minority Tutsis get in control? Why is the area divided into the countries of Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi? Why aren't the nations separated by ethnic groups instead?

Evidently the two groups co-existed long enough to develop separate cultures. Why are they fighting so violently now?

The answer to these questions could find European intervention (colonialism, providing ammunition, etc.) at the heart of the conflict. But America feels proud "knowing" that Africa needs our help, so would we like to hear that colonialism is part of the conflict? Would the media market such news? It hasn't so far.

Whazzup! Magazine

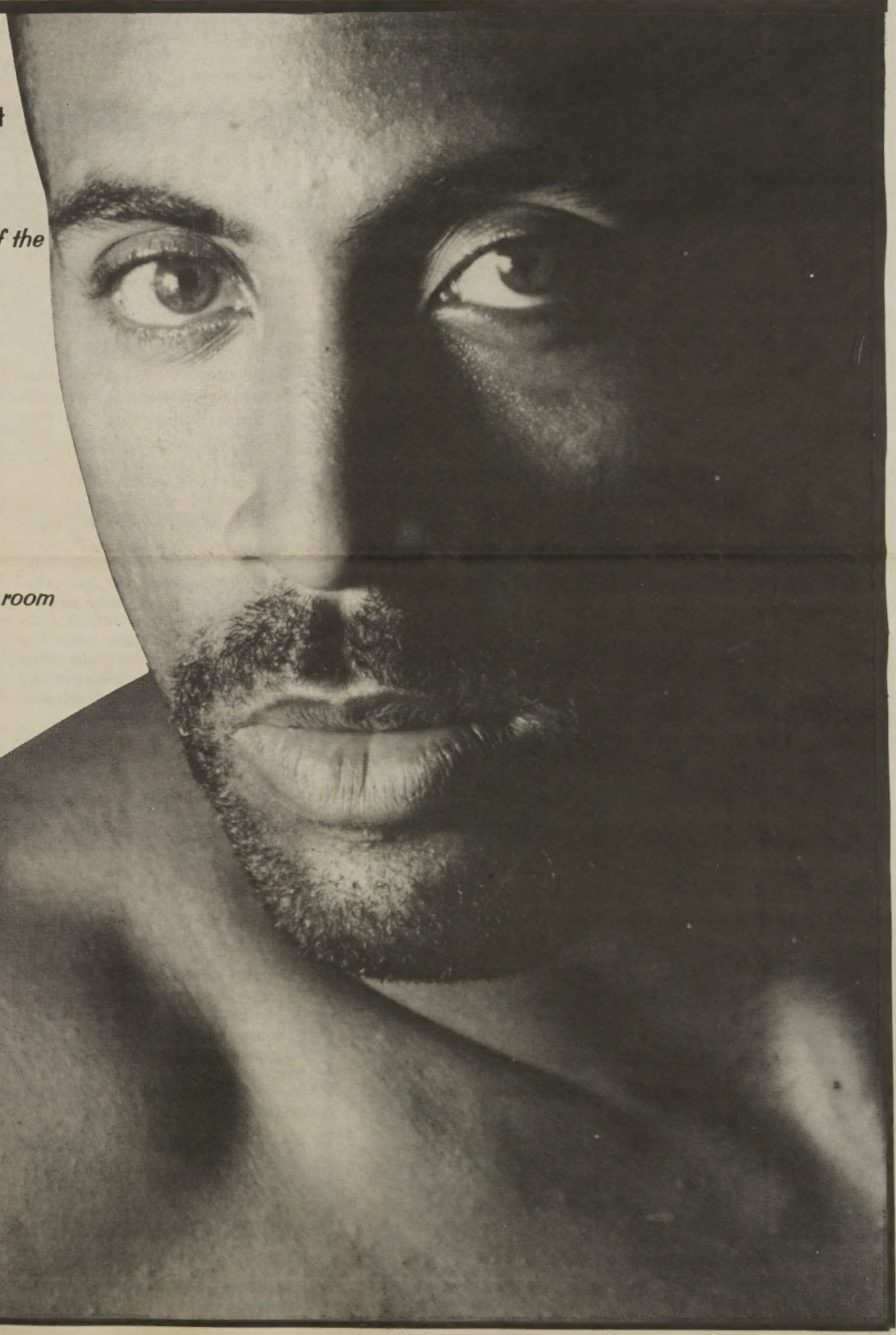
I Woke Up in the Middle of the Night This Morning

©1993

By Robert Wesley

I woke up in the middle of the
night this morning
and cried
and prayed
and remembered
and pledged to God
and danced
and sang
and felt sorry
and regretted
and buried old bones
and dug them up
and threw them around the room
and was quiet,

then hopeful again.



Model: Dino

Photographer:
Hopeton Stewart

The Back Page

New Personal Ads For Women

FE-MAIL

SBF (Butch) seeking sexy, voluptuous femme who loves to cook, cuddle and wrestle. Let's hold hands, go to the movies, take our time, and really get to now each other. Readers and writers are encouraged to respond. Send responses to True M: P.O. Box 30993, Oakland, CA 94604

GBF - 36 5'8" Soft Butch, Spiritual, Single, Sexy, Smart, Shy and Sensitive. Send Photo's & Write letters to P.O. Box 781 Atlanta, GA

Medium height, voluptuous, soft spoken, feminine, me brown skinned lipstick lesbian. I love hip hop and rap. Seeking friendship .I will send my photo if you send me yours. Send letters and photos to **Sexy P. at P.O. Box 30993 Oakland, CA 94604**

I am seeking buddies to explore life with. You are seeking a relationship orientated female. I am a kid at heart and I like quiet nights at home and candle lit dinners. Email me at **HnyTaster @aol.com**

GBF Blond hair, light brown skin, long legs and sexy smile. I am looking for sistahs in the hood who like skating, skiing, dancing and swimming. Let's party together at **BlooSkie@aol.com**

BF, 29, attractive, professional, loving and affectionate, very honest, enjoys walking, biking, movies and weekend getaways, lots of love and time to give to someone special. Sounds good, well problem is I'm married for convenience only. ISO female 27+ that enjoys a challenge & willing to take a chance at friendship & maybe more. No drugs, serious responses please. Page (708) 701-1976

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Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Support Groups

Transgender Support Group (MTF)
Every Tuesday
1:30pm - 3:00pm
Brother's Network 973 Market Suite 650 SF,CA

Glamour Dolls
MTF Support group contact meets every third Tuesday in Oakland. Contact Deahanna Wallace @ 510-834-8181 for more details

Just Us Men
(FTM) Trangender support group meets twice a month in Oakland. Contact Ptrick Forte @ 834-8181 for more details

Black Men's Xchange (BMX) Oakland
Meets every Friday at 8:00pm AMASSI Inc. 351 15th St. Oakland, CA

Black Men's Xchange (BMX)Inglewood, CA
Meets every Friday at 8:00pm AMASSI Call Deshawn @ 310.281.7742

Black Women's Xchange (BWX)
Meets every Friday at 8:00pm AMASSI Inc. 351 - 15th St. Oakland, CA

Men of All Colors Together Regular Monthly Events Call (415) 675-0201,San Francisco, CA

Gay Men Of African Decent
Contact Don Jackson @212-420-0773 ext 13
New York City, NY

Black Gay Mens Rap
Every Friday at 7pm Unity Fellowship Center
5149 W. Jefferson LA,CA

Group Trips

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The Bench & Bar
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The Box
Interracial crowd Thursday nights Hip House 715 Harrison. SF,CA

The Stud
Interracial Crowd on Monday Nights Hip Hop/ House 9th & Harrison SF, CA

The End Up
Interracial / Dancing House Dance Music best Sunday afternoons around 4pm 6th & Harrison SF, CA Cover

The Pendulum
Interracial - The only bar in the Castro with a large black male population Almost always busy 4146 18th
415-863-4441

Southern, CA

The Catch One
Women On Saturday, Men On Fridays Mostly Black on Holiday Weekends 4067 Pico Blvd. Los Angeles, CA

To send additional listings of clubs that feature gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual African American and/or Latino crowds specify type of crowd (Women, Men Both, etc.), special nights, type of music, location and phone # if available to: Whazzup! Magazine Event & Clublist P.O. Box 30993 Oakland, CA FAX: 510-836-4759 Email: Whazzup411@aol.com

The Lodge
Mostly Black men on Saturday nights/Women's Nights on Wednesday. 4923 Lankershiem Blvd.Los Angeles, CA 818-769-7722

The Study
Mostly Black No dancing , Watering Hole
1723 N. Western Los Angeles. 213-464-9551

The Annex
Mostly Black No dancing, Watering Hole
835 S. LaBrea Inglewood, CA. 310-671-7323

Washington D.C.

The Bachelor's Mill
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The Edge / Wet
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Nob Hill
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Tracks
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HOME BOYZ HAVEN
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The Monster
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Sugar Babies
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Keller's - No Dancing Bar 384 West St. New York City, Watering Hole

Two Potatoes 143 Christopher St. New York City - bar only some shows, Watering Hole

Crazy Nanny's Mostly Women about half African American Video Bar and Dance Club 21 7th Ave. New York City 212-366-6312

Chicago

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Atlanta

Loretta's
708 Spring St.404-874-8125 Dance Music / Bar

The Palace
15 Simpson 404-522-3000.R &B/House Music

Traxx
339 Marietta St. NW House from 11:00pm to 6:00am

The Marquette Lounge
809 Martin Luther King Dr N.W.

KARATS
Jazz Club -Wednesdays though Sundays 511 Peachtree St. N.E.

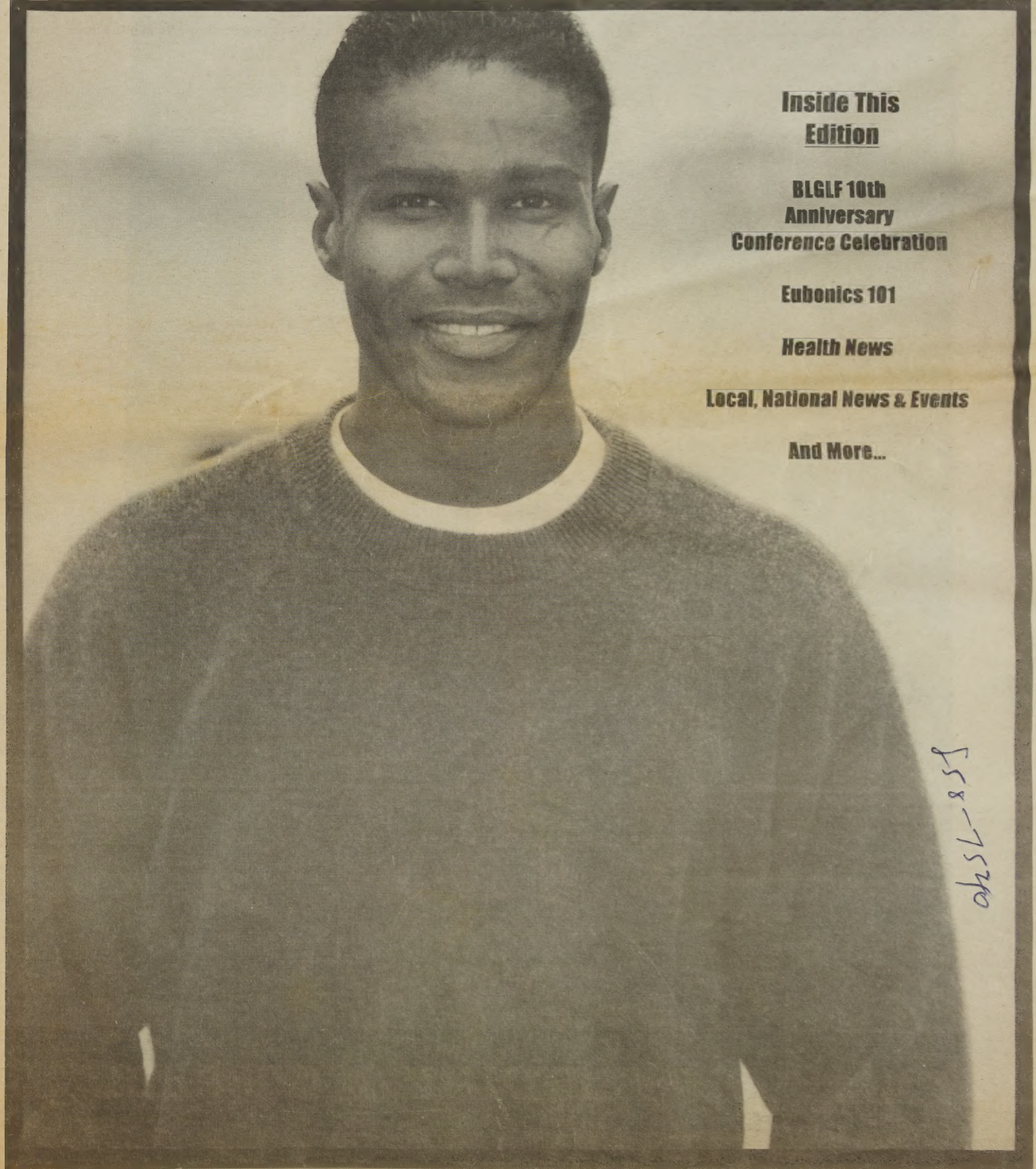
Dallas, Texas

Traxx
House/ Hip Hip 90% Black2821 St. Louis Fri., Sat., Sunday

The Metro
Mostly black on weekends2204 Elm St.

Whazzup! Magazine

Volume One - Issue 11 April 1997



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Eubonics 101

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Local, National News & Events

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UP!
3 HOT PARTIES

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"JUKE JOINT DANCE"
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ESTATE

SATURDAY, MAY 10TH
THE BATTLE
"THE THROWDOWN"
CELEBRITY GUEST
CHOICES NITE CLUB
D.J. PRINCE(S.D) D.J BEN(L.A.)

SUNDAY, MAY 11TH
THE VICTORY
"BLACK & TAN"
POOL PARTY
DESERT OASIS
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THE LINE IN THE SAND
HAS BEEN DRAWN!

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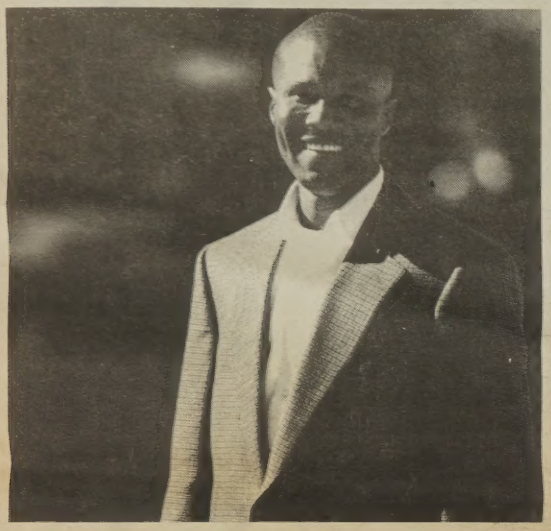
Partial proceeds to benefit Various non-profit Minority organizations

On the Cover
Duane Cramer



Duane Cramer

- Stephen Johnson

There have been requests from many of our readers to tell more about the people that are inside our magazine. You've asked us to go much deeper and share what some of the African American men and women in our community nationwide are doing to make a positive impact on our future and to showcase more than just a handsome or beautiful face, or another perfect physique.

Who is Duane Cramer? He is more than just the man on the cover of this edition of Whazzup! Magazine. You may have seen him interviewed on any one of the major television networks in the past few months (ABC World News Now, MSNBC and CNET), or perhaps escorting Vice-President Gore and his wife Tipper through the display of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt when it was displayed in its entirety on the mall in Washington D.C. in October of last Year.

Duane was raised on the east coast and currently resides in San Francisco. He earned a business degree from the University of Southern California. He is a successful integrated Sales Manager for the document company, Xerox. Duane is active in many community involvement projects. He is one of the NAMES Project Foundation's Board of Directors (and the only African American), an active participant in the Oakland Unified School Districts "Men Can Read Too" Program for elementary students, and serves on the Executive board of the Bay Area Black Employees of Xerox (a caucus group within Xerox Corporation) as Vice president. Duane has recently become active in the AIDS community doing lots of work to help bring and end to the pandemic through talking about his personal experiences and through being actively involved in various AIDS service organizations. It is through his story of losing his father, Dr. Joe J. Cramer, to AIDS ten years ago that has touched all whom he speaks with. At the time of his death, Duane's father was an Associate Dean at the Business School at Howard University and a professor of accounting.

Duane is also an accomplished photographer. His first photographs were published in Harper's Bazaar Magazine last year. Additionally his creative works have been showcased in Whazzup! Magazine. His work is featured in the centerfold and rear cover of this edition, the January 1997 Edition (rear cover) and the February 1997 edition (cover). He captures the inner essence of the people he photographs with a focus on portraying the sensitive, caring, vulnerable sides of African American men, an exciting change from the usual portrayal of African American men as gangsters, criminals or sex objects. Duane's vision is to capture and share these positive and warm images with the world and to make a difference in how we are literally viewed or perceived.

Traveling around the world, photography, reading, dancing, spending time with family and friends as well as making a difference and a positive impact on everyone he meets is how Duane spends his time. He is currently focused on ensuring that the partnership between the NAMES Project and the Balm of Gilead, a national not-for-profit secular organization headquartered in New York City is a great success. The two foundations recently partnered to help bring and end to the AIDS pandemic. The Balm of Gilead is focused on doing this through the penetration of the Black Church through education and awareness. Its mission is to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS among African-Americans and to support those already infected by mobilizing the religious community to address HIV/AIDS appropriately and effectively.

Author Toni Morrison, Duane Cramer and Former Mayor Dinkins of NY, NY at a benefit for the Balm of Gileaad in held in New York City

When you meet Duane you can see and feel the electrifying energy from his magnetic personality. It is nice to share with you another caring, intelligent, brother who is making a significant difference in our community and nationwide. Watch out world, Duane Cramer's open heart and positivity brings spark of life to everything he touches!

If you are interested in working with the Names Project you can call your local Names Project Chapter or 415.882.5500 and ask for the volunteer services coordinator. The Balm of Gilead is also in need of your support for the African American community. Please call 212.730.738 and ask for Rosetta Gadson or Darlene Cheek. Ask them what you can do to help.

Letter From The Editor

The Trailblazer Awards, which were jointly sponsored by AMASSI, Inc., the East Bay Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club and the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, were founded as a means of celebrating lesbians and gays in the Bay Area's East Bay who have made significant contributions to the community, as well as individuals that support and advocate for gay, lesbian and transgender rights.

On March 1, 1997, I was honored to be one of the recipients of the First Annual Trail Blazer Awards. To my regret, I was unable to be there to physically accept the award. I would like to take this time to express my gratitude an honor to the Trailblazer Awards Committee for choosing me and to Valerie P. Mann, also an Award recipient, for agreeing to accepting the award on my behalf. Thank You, I am honored to be the first recipient of the Award in the category of Media. Valerie your belief in me has helped to make me strong. I would also like to congratulate all of the other award recipients.Congratulations!

A trailblazer is one who discovers or opens a way through to a place or one who discovers or invents a solution to a problem or leads in any undertaking. This definition does describe me ,but, I couldn't possibly accept this honor without sharing it with the many people that made it possible. To the many of you that have made significant contributions to helping Whazzup! Magazine become a reality, to our readers, our writers, our staff and our advertisers, I say thank you. As Publisher, I've had the opportunity to guide our publication from a mere vision to a reality, however, I could not have done it alone. Thanks for being supportive and committed to my vision.

I also thank God for being the power within me that urged me on when many people said that it couldn't be done.

In our first year we have been able to effectively increase our readership which now spans the nation. This makes me proud. But it makes me even prouder to know that leaders in my immediate vicinity have recognized our tireless efforts to produce a publication that is synonymous with quality, variety, and empowerment. A publication that is by us, about us and for us.

I am dedicated to continue in my efforts to expand and develop Whazzup! Magazine into a publication that is worthy of its readership. I am committed to educating, informing, entertaining, and empowers our community. Lookout for some of the changes that our sure to come in future issues. With your help we will be here to continue to improve on what we are doing now. Thank you all for your continued support

Peace and Love,
Stephen Johnson

7th Annual

Brother - 2 - Brother

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- Libation Ceremony
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- Swimming Pool Activities
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Whazzup! Magazine
P.O. Box 30993
Oakland, CA 94604-3693
VOICE: 510.836.4759 FAX: 510.836.4758
EMAIL: Whazzup411@aol.com

Staff
Editor / Publisher - Stephen Johnson
Assisting Editor - Jordon Bentley
Political Editor - David Simmons
Travel Editor-Ron Fulcher
Music Editor - Tony Ward
Marketing Coordinator - Demetres Munford

Advertising & Sales Representatives:
Concept and Design Marketing - Local & National
2501 Ivy Drive Suite 19
Oakland, CA 94606
VOICE: 510.836.4759 FAX: 510.836.4758
EMAIL: Whazzup411@aol.com

Rivendell Marketing Company - National
212.242.6863

John Brisbane - Oakland / Bay Area
Lawrence Denson - Los Angeles / Southern California
Cseneca Parker - Los Angeles / Southern California
James Morgan - Los Angeles / Southern California

Editorial Contributors:
Rachel Miller
Ron Fulcher
rodtney ross
Dino
Stephen Johnson
Electronic Urban Report (EUR)

Cover Model
Duane Cramer

Cover Photography
David Fredrickson

Centerfold Photography
Duane Cramer

Additional Photography:
Hopeton Stewart and Stephen Johnson

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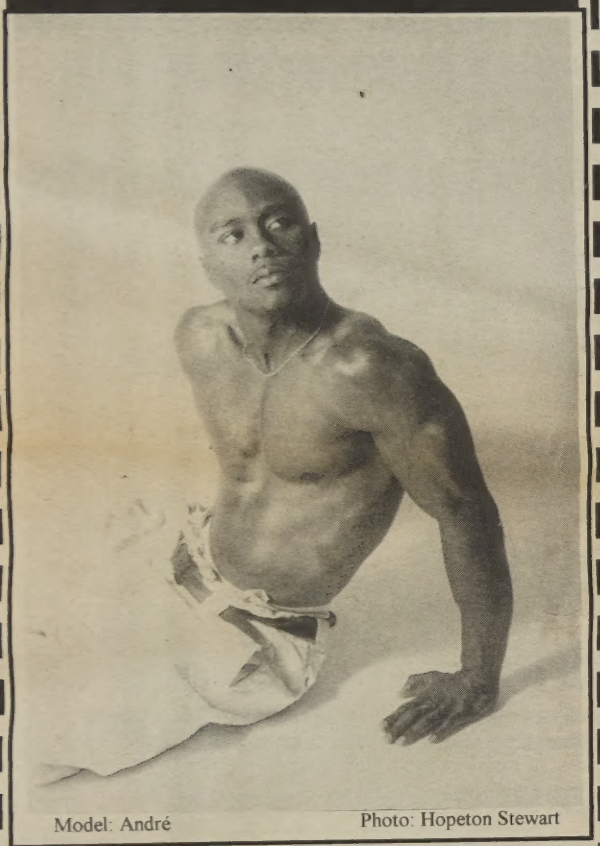

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BLGLF 10th Anniversary Conference a Tremendous Success

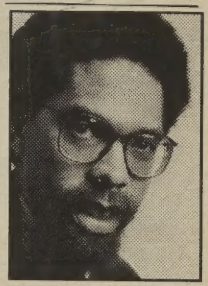
Alice Walker

On the weekend of Feb. 14, 1997 the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum hosted its 10th Anniversary conference at the Long Beach Hilton in Long Beach, CA.

Approximately 900 of the Nation's foremost African American leaders gathered together to triumph in the successes and challenges of leadership in the African-American LesBiGayTrans community. The assembly offered abundant opportunities to network, be educated and enjoy uplifting experiences. This years theme, "Black Lesbian and Gays: Celebrating our Legacy," focused on the powerful, influential and critical contributions made by Black lesbians and gays.

The conference committee headed by Valerie Wagner and Troy Fernandez seemed to leave no stone unturned when it came to the planning of this extremely successful event. Speakers at the 10th Anniversary conference (NBLGC) included former Surgeon General Dr. Joycelyn Elders, poet and activist June Jordan, Pulitzer Prize winning author Alice Walker, and Harvard University professor and philosopher Dr. Cornel West. "Our selection of keynote speakers acknowledges that our legacy as lesbians and gays of African descent transcends the Lesbian and gay community," said Conference Chair Valerie Wagner. "We welcome the presence of our 'family' as well as our allies in the continuing struggle to liberate and empower all people."

Former Surgeon General, Dr. Joycelyn Elders, the first African American and the first women to hold that post delivered the opening address at the AIDS/Health care institute. Dr. Elders revolutionized the direction of public health opinion with her concerns for the common person and concentration on preventative medicine. "We are on a prevention diet with a dying appetite. When we talk about prevention we don't have any money. We have to borrow, scrape and steal. We can't afford prevention. All of the sudden someone is in the hospital dying and we are doing everything we can to try to save them. That's what I mean by a dying appetite," said Elders. "I want to change the way we think about health by putting prevention first."



Dr. Cornel West

Political activist, poet, essayist and playwright June Jordan delivered the address at the opening ceremony. Jordon's work transcends the bounds of self and society, while expressing conscious optimism, equality and tenderness. She is one of the rare activist whose greatest strength is her ability to live what she believes. Appearing in virtually every major anthology of contemporary poetry and authoring more than 19 books has made Jordan the most published African-American writer in history.

Alice Walker, best selling writer and feminist, also delivered a keynote address. Walker won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award in 1983 for her best selling novel *The Color Purple*. She is also the author of 6 novels.

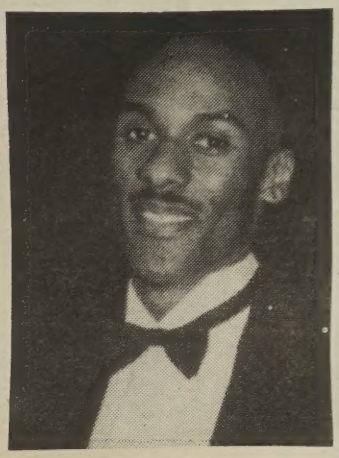
Dr. Cornel West, Professor of Afro-American Studies and Philosophy of Religion at Harvard University, delivered the address at the closing ceremony. Dr. West has written numerous books, including his break-through, *Race Matters*, which received best seller status in 1993.

The Key Note Speakers collectively inspired conference attendees with inspirational messages on living, loving and what it really takes to be leaders. The conference offered a variety of workshops such as "So you want to be a parent", topics included gaining access to sperm donors, artificial insemination and lesbian or gay adoptions. Other helpful workshops included grant writing tips, building healthy relationships, physical fitness and transgender issues to name a few.

Conference attendees enjoyed networking with some of the nations most powerful and charismatic leaders. Many were able to leave the event with a wealth of knowledge, beneficial contacts, new friendships and a sense of empowerment. The NBLGC has a way of filling people with a larger sense of purpose, a feeling that success is inevitable if we continue strive, persevere and work together for it.

National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum Snapshots

Charlene Cothran
Editor of Venus Magazine
Brenda Crawford
Chair for East Bay Lesbian
and Gay Democratic Club



Keith Boykin
Executive Director of
NBLGLF

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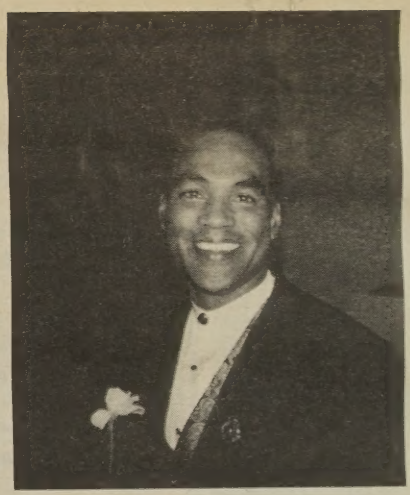
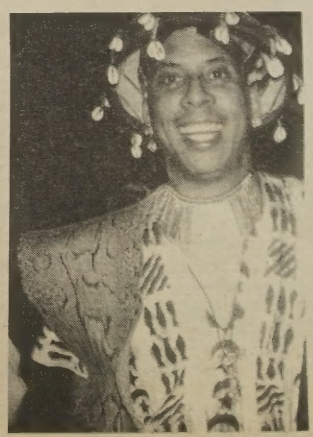


Phil Wilson
Co-Founder of the NBLGLF

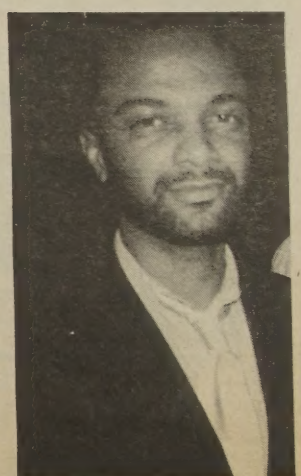
Marjorie J. Hill, Ph.D.
Commisioner for N.Y.
State Compensation Board

Deja Dior
Trangender case manager
for the Brother's Network



Gregory Victorianne
The man behind ButtiVox

George Bellinger Jr.
Recipient of this year's
Fredrick Garnett Award



Blaine Teamer
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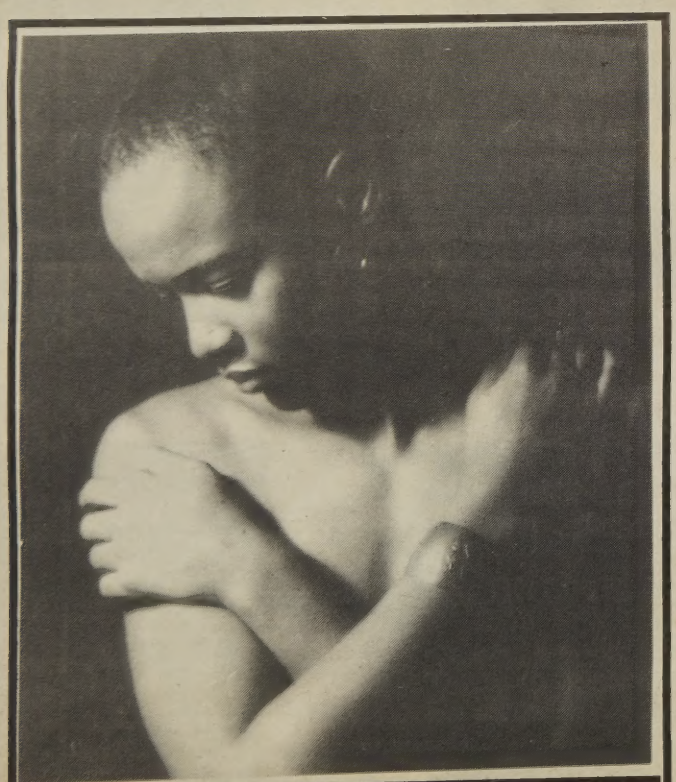

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Dr. Joycelyn Elders Speaks

Dr. Joycelyn Elders

The powerful, energetic, and charismatic Dr. Joycelyn Elders shares her views on hot topics at the NBLGLC

Masturbation

*90% of women do it.
*80% of men do it
and the rest lie.

Leadership

* As leaders we have to make sure that we are educated.

* We've got to be leaders that are willing to be headlights, we've been taillights for far to long.

* Empower yourself, don't wait for someone else to empower you.

* You've got to take some risk.

* You've got to be responsible.

* We've got to be concerned and committed. Concern is negotiable. Commitment is not. When I went to Washington, I was committed and that was not negotiable.

* We've got to deal with the realities of what's going on so that we can approach the real problems.

On HIV Prevention

We need to :

* Find prevention strategies that work and that are scientifically based.

* Our communities must be involved in implementing and developing programs.

* We have to target programs that are culturally appropriate. They need to fit the community.

* We have to all be involved. We can't do it alone. It will take businesses, churches and other organizations to make significant changes.

* Work on reducing other STD'S.

* Offer prevention marketing strategies that reach all our communities.

* Repeal Laws that make having clean needles illegal.

* Empower ourselves and the community to deal with our problems.

Entertainment News

From the Electronic Urban Report
http://www.EURweb.com

Magic Johnson is continuing his movie theater chain, with a new site set for the Warrensville Civic Center in Cleveland, Ohio. The $10 million, 65,000 square-foot development will accommodate 14-screens and 3,400 "plush" rocking seats. Construction is scheduled to begin in June. The theater will open in the Spring of 1998.

Michael Jackson has denied charges that he plagiarized an Italian song, "I Cigni di Balaka" (The Swans of Balaka) for his 1991 tune "Will You be There." Appearing in a courtroom in Rome, Jackson was asked to explain why 37 notes were the same in each song. Jackson replied softly, "There is some similarity, but it's completely coincidental."

Samuel L. Jackson will once again host the annual IndependentSpirit Awards. This is his second time in a row as emcee for the eventwhich will be held March 22 in Santa Monica, California.

Spike Lee's feature length documentary, "Four Little Girls," about the four Alabama girls killed in a church bombing in 1963, will have a theatrical release before it airs on HBO, whichproduced the project. The move will allow "...Girls," to be considered for Oscar eligibility. Films shown on television before they hit the big screen are not eligible for Academy consideration. The film will screen for two weeks starting July 9.

In other Spike news...Spike/DDB, Lee's new advertising company, will handle the promotion of the **Evander Holyfield/Mike Tyson** rematch, which airs May 3 on Showtime. This is Spike/DDB's first client, and reports say a substantial multi-million dollar ad budget is backing the fight.

For all you **Lisa Stansfield fans**, the singer will be releasing a new self-titled CD in April, with the single, "The Real Thing," set for release next month.

Autumn Jackson, 22, has been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges that she tried to extort $40 million from **Bill Cosby** by claiming she is his illegitimate daughter. Jackson, and her alleged accomplice, **Joe Medina,** 51, were named in the action on charges of conspiracy, extortion and engaging in interstate commerce with intent to commit offenses. If convicted, they face a possible prison term of 12 years and fines of $750,000.

Cuba Gooding Jr. tells "People" magazine he's relieved he received a best supporting actor nomination for hisrole in **"Jerry Maguire"**. "Everybody's been like, 'You're going to get nominated.' So when I was, it was more of a relief than a celebration," he says. "It was like 'Whew! I made it.' I felt like I just squeaked in the door, the last one in."

Also in People...A recent spat between **Whitney Houston** and hubby **Bobby Brown** ended with Houston being forced off a bus in the middle of Utah. The couple, who are on the road with New Edition, got into a heated screaming match on the bus ride to salt Lake City. Brown had the driver pull off the highway so Houston, the couple's 3-year-old daughter, Bobbi Kristina, and the nanny could get out. A second tour bus, which was following right behind them, picked up them, but Houston and her entourage headed directly to the Salt Lake airport and flew to Los Angeles. Brown stayed with the band, but didn't perform with the group at Salt Lake's Delta Center.

Gospel star **Kirk Franklin** has re-signed with L A -based **Gospo Centric Records** under a new multi-million dollar contract. (Talk about 'melodies from heaven'! CHING CHING!)

In other gospel news...Singer **Daryl Coley** is returning home to Oakland, CA to record his next live album. The recording is set for Feb. 22, and while his label isn't giving any specifics,there are expected to be some "very special guests" involved.

Wesley Snipes will produce the Tri-Star comedy action thriller "The Big Hit." Snipes is also believed to be eyeing a role in the movie, which centers on a likable hitman who tries to please everyone at the same time while getting caught up with kidnapping, gang warfare -- and dinner with his fiancee's parents.

Queen Latifah just landed two co-starring movie roles. In March, the actress/rapper will start production on "Sphere," starring bigwigs **Dustin Hoffman, Sharon Stone** and **Samuel L. Jackson.** She'll play a Navy habitat specialist. After "Sphere," Latifah will jump right into "The Kiss," starring **Holly Hunter** and **Danny Devito.** Latifah will play a blues singer who befriends a troubled divorcee (Hunter).

The NAACP called for a boycott of major hotel chains earlier this week, claiming they've done a poor job in hiring and promoting African-Americans. The civil rights organization based its findings on a survey of 16 popular chains. However, none answered the entire survey and just six received passing grades. Some of the hotels not responding said they don't give out detailed information to anyone and that their refusal to cooperate had nothing to do with their commitment to equal opportunity. Here are some of the results: Marriott International and Hilton Hotels both received "C's," the highest grade awarded; Hyatt Hotels, Adam's Mark Hotels and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Corp. were graded "C-minus," and HFS Inc., operators of the Days Inn chain, got a "D."

Deion Sanders' wife **Carolyn Sanders** has filed for divorcefrom the athlete a second time. The new petition, filed in McKinney, Texas, cites adultery and cruel treatment as grounds for the divorce. In addition, a judge has granted Ms. Sanders a temporary restraining order against Deion and awarded her temporary custody of their children -- daughter Deiondra, 6, and son Deion, Jr., 3. Sanders filed for a divorce last September, citing some of the same reasons, but it was dismissed that same month at the request of both parties.

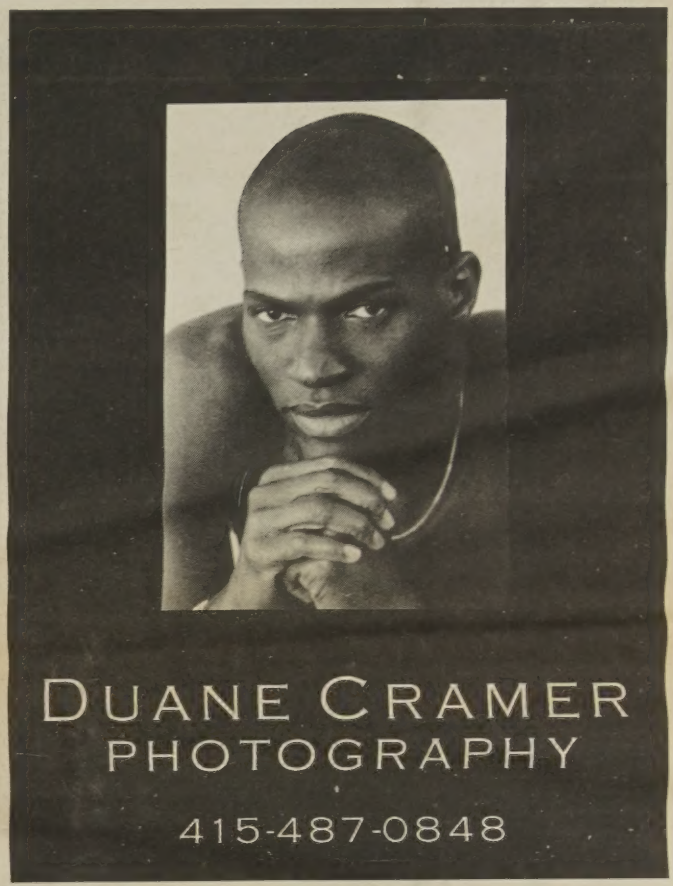
Will Smith, star of the upcoming "Men In Black," may reunite with the director of that movie, **Barry Sonnenfeld,** for the film of the TV series "Wild, Wild West." Smith is currently in talks to play the James T. West role made popular on television by **Robert Conrad. George Clooney** and **Johnny Depp** are the names being thrown around to play West's witty sidekick **Artemus Gordon**.

Coolio is being sued by a record producer claiming that the rapper owes him more than $400,000 for his work on the 1995 hit"Gangsta's Paradise." In the suit filed earlier this week in Los Angeles, Doug Rasheed claims that the rapper deducted the costs of acquiring samples of the song from his royalties. Rasheed also claims that he's only received a portion of his royalties. According to the suit, the royalties were supposed to be as high as 4 percent, depending on how well the record sold.

R&B crooner **Teddy Pendergrass** is set to have a new CD out on April 15 called "You and I." The first single, "Don't Waste My Time," is due out on March 17.

No wonder **Jodeci's DeVante Swing** has been missing in action. According to the April issue of **"Vibe" magazine,** the singer/producer filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection last November. Apparently, the brother, who obviously has no business sense, couldn't make the payments on the 13 cars he was leasing.

Ray Charles recently knocked 'em dead at a fashion preview held in Milan, Italy. The legendary singer was invited by the Ferragamo family to sing during the preview, but it was halted when the audience went wild with applause when Charles broke out with his signature tune "Georgia On My Mind."



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Jaye King

Creative, well organized, artistic, goal orientated, caring, an effective communicator who is polite, intelligent,and currently single. These are all words that describe Jaye King. Jaye was born in Manhattan, New York in 1958 and moved to the Bay Area in 1991. This free-lance model attended the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre of Harlem as a scholarship student, and boy can he dance! As you can tell by the photos, it's actually very easy to mistake Jaye for someone a lot younger. At 37 years of age he could easily pass for 21.

What's important to him? "Loving and accepting myself for who I truly am, not for what people want or perceive me to be."

When asked of his most significant accomplishment Jaye says, " My most significant accomplishment is maintaining six and one half years of continuous sobriety and recognizing that without a program of recovery in my life, I have nothing"

Jaye believes in a healthy love and respect for womankind. "As mother's and purveyors of life they are our strength. Without them, we wouldn't be here.I am proud of my developing respect for women's place and role in society."

Where are you most likely to see Jaye? You might catch him at work at Body Citizen, 18th & Castro, San Francisco, CA, or heading the door at select club venues in the City.

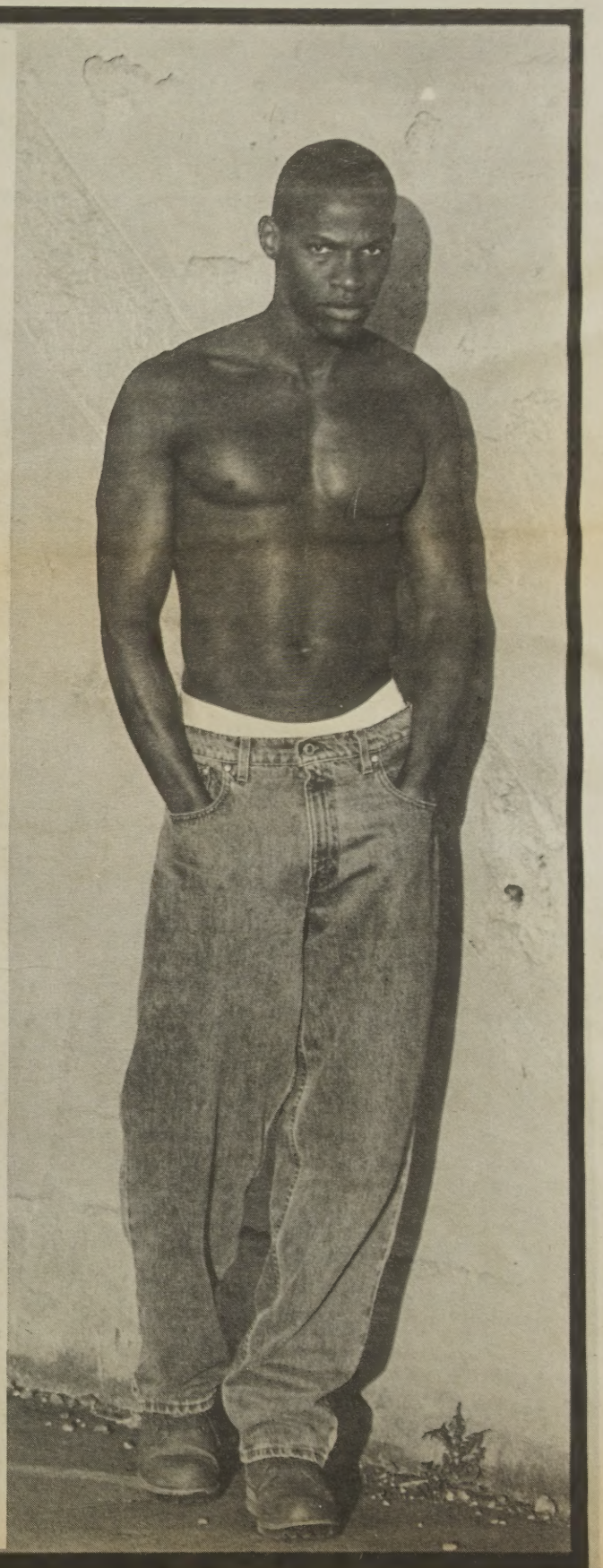
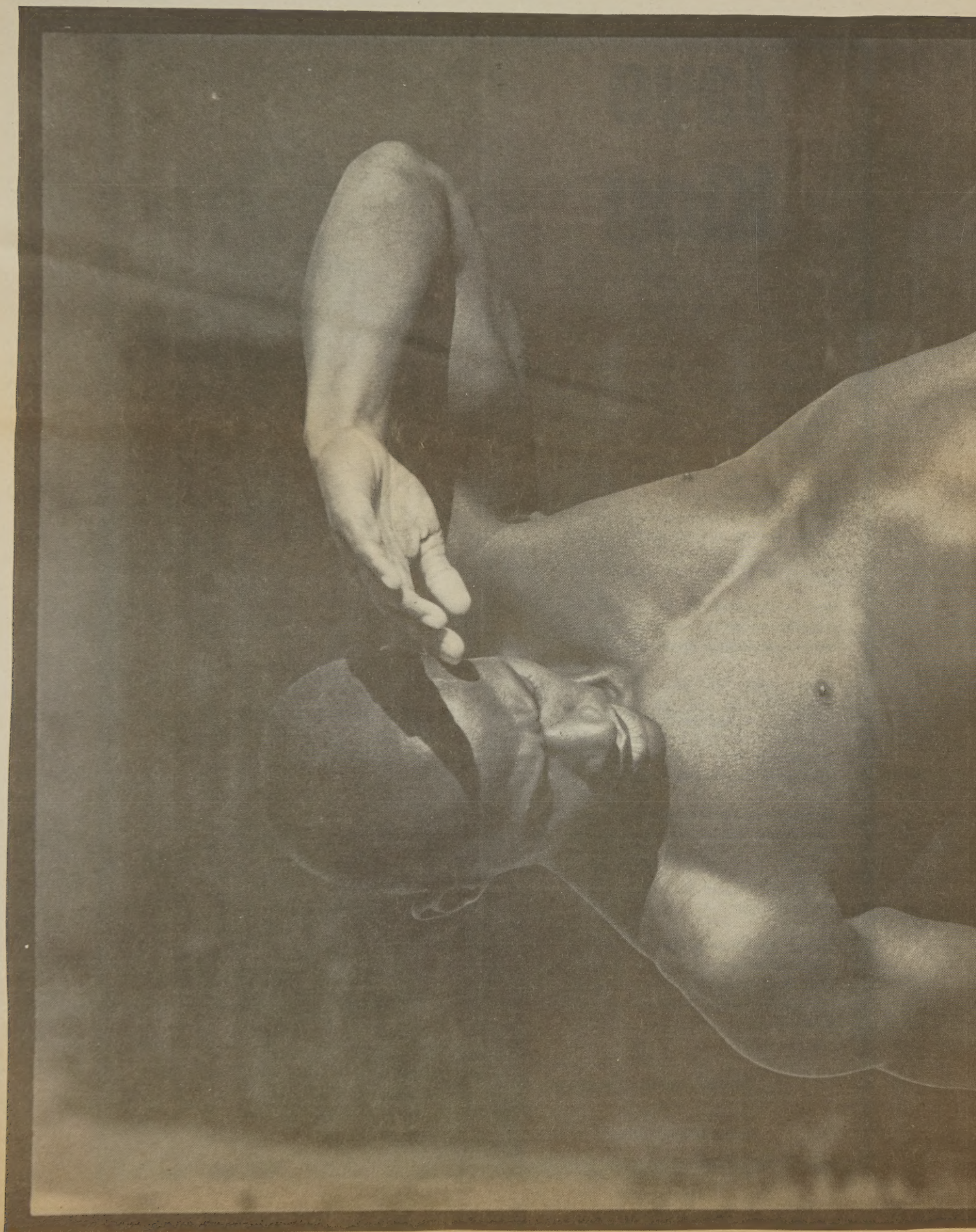


Photo: Duane Cramer



There is no such thing as the perfect hair, eyes, nose, lips. Some of of us are roses. Some of us are tulips. There is no need to compare. We are all beautiful because we are God's Children. That's the truth.

Model: Jaye King// Photo: Duane Cramer

Reprinted from Walk Tall: Affirmations for people of

Health News

US may apologize for Tuskegee experiment

A generation after it was learned that black men were used as guinea pigs for the study of syphilis in the infamous Tuskegee experiment, the government may be moving closer to a formal apology.

An open discussions of the government's deception in the famous experiment is believed to be critical to overcoming distrust in the African American community about AIDS.

President Clinton's apology in 1995 to the victims of secret Cold War-era radiation experiments may have set the pattern, Dr. David Satcher, head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said in an interview. "That's the kind of thing we would anticipate, but we don't know at this point what would happen," he said.

The Tuskegee experiment was conducted in Tuskegee, Ala., between 1932 and 1972. The government withheld treatment from 399 men with syphilis so they could study how it spreads and kills. The men weren't told they had the disease. Nor were they given penicillin after it became the standard treatment in 1947. The study became public in 1972 with a story by The Associated Press.

To the black community, it was a betrayal that caused a distrust of public health officials that lingers to this day. Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, former U.S. health secretary and now president of Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, said it would take a monumental effort for the government to regain the trust of black people. "This is not going to be easy and it's not going to happen overnight," Sullivan said. "Twenty years later, we are still wrestling with the damage that's been done. Science needs to be open."

Since 1973, the government has paid $10 million to a total of 6,000 victims of the Tuskegee experiment and their heirs in an out-of-court settlement of a class-action lawsuit.

"It's unfortunate that the government has waited over 20 years after the litigation and over 60 years since it started to apologize," said Fred Gray, the Tuskegee attorney who brought the lawsuit. "If one does come, I hope they would make it in a proper fashion."

"Miss Evers' Boys," an HBO fictional movie that premiered on February 22, deals with the study. Satcher, whose agency took control of the Tuskegee study in 1957 from the U.S. Public Health Service, said the movie will bring pressure on the government to apologize to the victims and their relatives.

"Nobody is comfortable with the fact that this part of our history is being openly discussed again," he said. "There is a certain amount of pain we all feel."

"This movie was made about the past, but it might as well have been the present," said Dr. James Curran, dean of the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta. "It's really about 1997. The palpable distrust across the nation makes me think we have a ways to go."

At a showing of the movie in Atlanta, black health professionals said the HBO movie may hamper efforts to stop the spread of AIDS in black communities. "It will likely set us back 10 years as we try to get ahold of HIV," said Sandra McDonald, an AIDS educator. "It's up to us to gain back this trust before we lose more lives."

"These people were human beings and they were treated like rats. What are we going to do to ease that?" said Ray Glover, 20, a black Atlanta resident who watched the movie.

TPAC gives spending priorities to PWA consumers

- Philadelphia

The Philadelphia AIDS Consortium (TPAC), the region's Ryan White Title II Planning Coalition, decided at its February 13th Board of Directors meeting to hand over the responsibility for setting spending priorities for new state AIDS dollars to consumers (people living with HIV/AIDS or the parent/legal guardian of a child living with HIV/AIDS).

The amount of new Ryan White Title II dollars to the region is just over $400,000. The unprecedented move was proposed by the TPAC Priorities Committee, co-chaired by Alicia Beatty of The Circle of Care and Michael Hinson of The Colours Organization, who reported to the Board that the Priorities Committee unanimously supported the move of priority setting responsibility to the consumers of services who are supposed to be served by those dollars. Also unanimously supporting the move was the TPAC Consumer Caucus.

The plan is to call a region-wide meeting of consumers who will first be given available information about current services and the estimated need for services, as well as what services can be paid for out of Ryan White dollars. Then consumers will engage in a process of prioritizing those areas of spending which they believe are most important.

While the Board has reserved the right to assign specific percentages of money to be spent on a given priority (based on estimated service gaps and the unit cost of a specific service), they have vowed to accept the priority recommendations on which areas will be funded at all with the new money as they are presented by consumers.

There were strong concerns expressed by two Board members representing the Asian/Pacific Islander (API) communities about the fairness of a consumer-only process. According to Richard Liu of AIDS Services in Asian Communities (ASIAC) and Kiyoshi Kuromiya of Critical Path AIDS Project, there are serious culturally-specific barriers for API consumers to participate in such a process, and if the process moved forward there would be no API representation at all for priorities setting.

Board member Jeff Maskovsky commented, "As with all previous priorities setting processes, there exists the possibility that some groups will be under represented or not represented at all. I think it is incumbent upon all Board and community members to get as many consumers as possible to attend the meeting and be represented."

Many Board members also noted that although there are access barriers to overcome, there are access barriers for consumers already in place in a provider-driven process and that a consumer-driven process would still be the best process since consumers are the ones who have direct knowledge of their own needs.

According to Joe Cronauer, TPAC Board President, "This is truly a momentous event. Just a few years ago the thought of PWAs having control over priorities for their own money would not even be imaginable. And today TPAC took a major step forward which no other planning group has ever taken to help empower those we are supposed to serve. No doubt it will take awhile to work out the bugs, but I think this will be a model that others will follow in the future."

TPAC Priorities Committee members said that they will do all that is necessary to work toward fair consumer representation, and that details of the consumer meeting should be available and widely distributed within the week. For more information, call TPAC at 215-985-6200.

Guidelines for viral load, treatment expected

Two government panels are in the process of developing the first standard guidelines for antiviral therapy and viral load testing for HIV. According to a report in AIDS Alert, the panels will publish their recommendations in the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report later this month. The first panel, formed by the National Institutes of Health and chaired by Dr. Scott Carpenter of Brown University, is developing basic principles. The job of the second panel, chaired by Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and Dr. John Bartlett of Johns Hopkins University, is to promulgate standards based on these principles.

Dr. Bartlett pointed out that the committees are distinguished from previous ad hoc AIDS committees by the fact that the members plan to continue to meet on a regular basis over the next 3 years to revise the guidelines as needed. He added that revisions to the guidelines for the use of protease inhibitors and viral load, first presented last June by the International AIDS Society based in San Francisco, will be relatively minor. "I think we're looking at modest changes with the guiding principle based on the statement that we ought to kill the virus and do it for as long as we can."

Dr. Bartlett predicts that "...the consensus is going to be that anybody who has a high viral burden needs to be treated, and treated with at least two and possibly three or four drugs. The question is what is too high--is it 500, 5,000, 10,000 or 30,000 [copies per mL]? Everyone has a different way to define high viral burden, so there is some fine tuning that needs to be done."

However, according to the article, the first panel "...has had difficulty reaching consensus on the importance of CD4 count testing in the new treatment scheme, reflecting how much the treatment paradigm has shifted in the past year." Dr. Carpenter believes that there is general agreement that viral testing is needed prior to treatment, 2 or 3 weeks after treatment has begun, and at 3-month intervals thereafter. "But how helpful CD4 count will be after the initial test is still up in the air." Controversy also persists on whether patients with no detectable virus should receive aggressive antiretroviral treatment.

NY begins newborn HIV testing

In the first such program in the United States, hospitals in New York have begun open mandatory testing of all newborns for HIV.

The state was already conducting anonymous HIV tests on infants for statistical purposes, but on Feb. 1, hospitals began mandatory disclosure of the results.

Under the new policy, hospitals are required to track down and counsel mothers on their HIV status weeks after they leave the hospital. "Certainly this is a very charged issue and an extraordinary undertaking, politically and as a public health program," Dr. Barbara DeBuono, the state health commissioner, told the Times. "It is being watched very closely by other states and by the (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) to see if it has any significant impact."HIV testing has been controversial because it reveals not a baby's HIV status but the mother's, through the presence or absence of her antibodies in the baby's blood. One in four HIV newborns exposed to HIV in the womb becomes infected. HIV cannot be detected at birth.

Most health care professionals favor HIV testing of pregnant women because early treatment can help prevent transmission of the virus to the baby.

Clinton budgets small AIDS increase

The Clinton Administration has announced that funds for AIDS distributed under the Ryan White CARE Act will increase in 1998 by approximately $40 million compared with 1997.

This brings the total amount allocated for 1998 under Ryan White to $1 billion. The White House also announced that funding for prevention programs under the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will increase to $637 million. This means that compared with 1997, the CDC will receive $20 million more for prevention in 1998.

Donna Shalala, HHS secretary, commented that until AIDS drugs and vaccine show an impact on the epidemic, "...our first priority must be prevention."

The Clinton budget plan includes modest funding increases for the Ryan White CARE Act, HIV Prevention at the CDC, AIDS Research at the NIH and the HOPWA program at HUD. While these increases are modest and do not begin to meet the needs of the expanding epidemic, they are substantial increases in comparison to other public health and housing programs.

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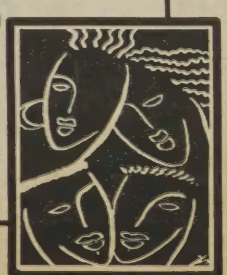

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EVERYONE CAN PLAY IN OUR SUPER BOWL

-Rachel Miller

"We are not fighting for integration, nor are we fighting for separation. We are fighting for recognition as human beings. We are fighting for...human rights."Malcolm X

I grew up in Wisconsin and have been an avid fan of the Green Bay Packers through years of good and bad times. In January I attended the Super Bowl in New Orleans with my brothers. It was the greatest sports experience of my life. Because of the overwhelming national interest in the game, the nearest flight home was in Houston so I had a 350 mile drive after the game to reflect on what had just happened.

The Packer fans had major differences in age, finances and social status but these things weren't important enough to matter. We set them aside because we had a common objective - to cheer our team on to victory. I realize that professional football isn't the gender community but the same principles can apply.

What if we lived in a society where it was impossible to distinguish men from women based solely on their clothing, makeup or behavior ... where no gender judgments were attached to dresses or pants...where terms like transgendered, transsexual and transvestite became unimportant...where stereotypes associated with being bisexual, heterosexual or homosexual stopped being an issue.

What if an open society such as this actually existed?

Could the achievement of that society be a common objective for all of us who are transgendered? How much should it matter to us if we are transvestite or transsexual, male or female, gay or lesbian? While those are real differences can't we set them aside? Isn't it more important to achieve something together?

There is a powerful system called "OGSMs" where the "O" stands for Objectives. It is used by major corporations to obtain alignment on common company objectives regardless of the differences between divisions and departments. An objective is a visionary condition extending perhaps 10 years into the future that describes where the organization wants to be. It helps to set annual Goals and deploy Strategies that lead to success. It helps to select the most effective efforts, implement them effectively and Measure the results.

In President Clinton's inaugural address he said that divisions and differences had to give way to a "new spirit of community." We need the same spirit and need to communicate, so let's all start talking and acting in an effort to bring these visions into realities.

Rachel Miller
will be conducting a reading/signing from "The Bliss of becoming one" - on Saturday, March 22nd at 7:00 PM at The Open Book Ltd., 910 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone (916) 498-1004

Web page: *http://members.aol.com/RachelMill/index.htm contains the gender family letters plus articles that were published in "The Femme Mirror."*

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Confessions of a Slave

rodtney ross

I met my Master four months ago while attending the Folsom St. Fair in San Francisco. I had always been attracted to leather. The look of it. The feel off it. The smell of it. But never considered a Leather lifestyle as an alternative gay lifestyle.

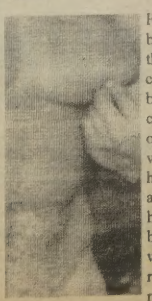
Little did I know, while watching men getting spanked at the spanking booth, that I would soon be the one getting plenty of spanking. I felt eyes on me as I was walking through the crowd to leave, and turned my head. There across a sea of faces a very handsome man was looking at me as we both walked in opposite directions. He disappeared into the crowd, never to be seen again, or so I thought.

We met hours later at a "salt & pepper" bar in the Castro. We talked for a bit. He put His hands firmly around my throat and asked, "What's the first thing that comes to your mind?" My immediate response was "trust". I thought perhaps He was testing me to see if I was frightened by Him or not. It turned out he was just sizing my neck for the locked collar I wear proudly today.

The first hint of a M/s relationship came that first night when we went for dinner. We sipped lemonade from each other's glass through crisscrossed straws between bites of food. Sir explained to me that He was a whole person and that He saw me as whole person. That He was not just a Master, but a Master, Daddy, Friend and Lover. This sounded great to me. I'm a holistic kind of guy and could relate to that. The word Master and it's relevance didn't register in my mind at the time. Sure I had heard of Leather men being Masters and slaves but had no idea of what that really meant. (Although I had been in a long term relationship with a man from the Middle East and served in the role of a "Middle Eastern housewife" - a role which is not unlike that of a slave.)

The rest of the evening was wonderfully spent dancing and hot spank love making at my place. We got to my apartment, went straight to the bedroom. He immediately sat down on the bed, grabbed me and threw me across his knee and gave me my first real spanking. Wonderful!! He then release me and ordered me to take His boots off. The rest of it I'll leave to your imagination.

He got up the next morning, I gave Him my number and address (He did not give me His) and He drove home to Los Angeles. Yes, He was from out of town. I had been doing a lot of self-realization work the last year or so and decided I really wanted to be in another relationship. I had had a couple of near misses during that period and given up on finding a suitable mate. So when I found out that Master was from out of town, I thought, "Oh well it was fun while it lasted." I went about my day savoring the experience from the night before and had just finished eating dinner when the phone rang. It was Master calling from Los Angeles. He had arrived in L.A. just an hour before and had just finished dinner. I knew then we were on the same page. We talked for hours. Master, filling me in on His lifestyle and where He was coming from, began my formal training by taking total control and thus our 24/7 M/s relationship had begun. It's been that way ever since.



For some reason I have always been generally attracted to men of the opposite race. I have always considered myself to be a human being first and foremost. Then comes gender, color and sexual orientation. But in the "real world", I'm very much aware of how my being Black affects every aspect of my life. From being helped in a department store, to being served in a gay bar. So when this Master/slave relationship was first purposed, I really had no thoughts or concerns about being a slave to a White Master. In a nutshell I live to serve and please my Man, regardless.

The first incident that brought the "race" thing into focus happened a few months into training. While on the phone casually talking, Master referred to me as "niggah". Not nigger. In all fairness to my Master, I must point out that He is very much into Black Urban Culture and has the utmost respect for the Black race and all people of color. This was quite a surprise. Actually two surprises. The first was Him calling me "niggah", and the second surprise was that I was not offended by it. I have heard many times, while riding the bus through town, young Black urban kids calling each other "niggah". This has always offended me, as I thought the calling of each other by this name was somehow self-degrading. And it puzzled me why, when Master called me this, it did not offend me.

After pondering this for awhile, I finally requested to talk to my Master about it. I grew up in a very middle class military environment and had no real experience with Black urban culture. It took a White man to educate me on a different facet of my own culture. The word "niggah" is used in an affectionate way amongst many urban African Americans. It was and is one of Master's ways of being affectionate with me. I realized that somehow in the deep bond that we share that this was the reason that it didn't offend me. However, I'm very sensitive to the feelings of others, and I can see how very easily this could be offensive to others, regardless of their ethnicity. Some African Americans would find it offensive for a white man to use this term with another Black person, and some Caucasians would perhaps "get off" on it in some racist way. So Master is very mindful of relating to me in this way in public.

There are probably some White men who like Black men that are into a type of dominance that includes a feeling of being superior over someone who is inferior. I feel this sometimes when my Master introduces me to another White Master. When Master calls me boy, I hear boi (endearment). When another Master calls me boy, I hear boy (inferiority). All I know is that my Master loves and respects me for who I am. A loving, self-respecting, intelligent human being, born to serve. We call it "affectionate leather".

So, what does it mean to be M/D/F&L, s/b/f&l ? Simply put, it means that we, Master & slave, are all of these things. And recognizing that we are, is what binds us together in an intensely spiritual monogamous relationship. It was Spirit who bought us together and Spirit who is truly both our Master.

About the author:
rodtney ross is the proud slave of Master Phil Ross. The author and it's Master currently reside in San Francisco, CA. Both author and Master are involved in counseling the "curious and committed" in Leather Lifestyles. They also travel , presenting seminars and workshops.

Ross & ross are two of the group producing LeatherWeb, 'The Global Leather Village' on the internet at URL:[http://www.leatherweb.com]. rodtney ross also counsels people living with HIV/AIDS on physical and spiritual healing, and gives advice.

YOUR FIRST LESSON IN... EBONICS 101:

WHAZZUP! Hello!/How are you?/What's Happening?/What's going on?

"DAMN- THAT SHIT IS DOPE!" That is a wonderful concept/object/action.

"I CAN'T FADE THAT!" I am unable to hande this at this time.

"I AIN'T HAVIN' IT!" This is not something that Shante will allow to occur..

"HOMEY- BOO WAS DROPPING PHAT BEATS."
Our friend Boo was playing some wonderful music.

"YO!- LET ME GAFFLE THAT BLUNT!"
Might I be able to indulge in your marijuana cigarette?

"JIMMY WAS ON AND I WAS HITTIN' IT!"
I had in my posession a condom, which was used in my engagement of sexual activity.

"WHAS'SUP! WHY YOU ALL UP IN MY SHIT!!!"
Please sir/madam- stay out of my affairs.

"SHE IS HELLA' CLOWIN' YOU HOMEY!"
The woman is creatively informing making you look like a fool.

"WOOOOOO- RENALDO WAS PITCHIN' STRAIGHT GAME TO BABY-BOY, AND IT WAS SMOOOOOOOVE!"
Renaldo was creatively inquiring if that cute guy was available, The is a high propability that he will get a date as a result of the interaction.

"STEP OFF COOL- BEFORE I BUST PHAT CAPS IN YOUR A WITH MY NINE..."** It would be beneficial to your physical state to leave this area, as I will soon be encouraged by your disrespect towards me to shoot bullets into your buttocks with my nine milimeter pistol.

"WHY IS THE 5-OH ALWAYS BUGGIN'!!!"
Why are the police officers always bothering us?

"FRIDAY NIGHT- COLD CHILLIN' WITH A 40 AND A BLUNT." It is Friday evening, and I am leisurely enjoying a forty ounce bottle of malt liquor and a marijuana cigarette.

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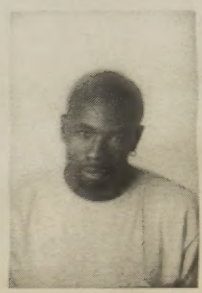

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EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT '97
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

May 9-11, 1997

The following information is provided if you are planning to attend:

Special Group Rates have been arranged for you convenience through American and United Airlines.
Please call Ron Fulcher at American Express Travel
(800) 484-2733 ext 0564 (outside California)
and (510) 268-1064 within California
for booking your air and hotel reservations.
(DO NOT CALL THE AIRLINES DIRECTLY)

All airline tickets ar non-refundable and a $50 change fee will be assessed for any changes to itinerary which may result in a higher fare if ticket has to be reissued. All fares are not guaranteed until ticket has been issued.

Special Hotel Room Rates have also been arranged with the following hotels:

The Ritz Carlton Rancho Mirage
The Villa Hotel, Palm Springs
Desert Palms Inn Resort
Cathedral City Boys Club

For individual reservations , call (800) 484-2733 ext 0564 and reference the African American Gay and Lesbian Empowerment Summit: All reservations must be received by April 9, 1997. All individual reservations must be guaranteed an accompanied by a two night room deposit, or with a major credit card which will be charged at the time of the reservation. Check in time is after 3pm and check out time is 12 noon Late check-outs are handled on an individual basis and is the responsibility of the guest. Cancellation of reservations must be received 1 day prior to arrival and if not cancelled may result in credit card being charged for no-show and is not refundable

---

SEE YOU THERE!

Things To Do...

Events, Etc

Birthday Extravaganza in Honor of Sharyn Grayson March 20, 1997 9-2am at Cabel's Reef 2272 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, CA

The Brothers Network Leadership Retreat March 22-23, 1997 Info: 415-356-8140 // San Francisco, CA

The Afican American Gay and Lesbian Empowerment Summit Palm Springs, CA May 9-11, 1997 Info: 1-619-770-6053

DC Black Pride Washinton D.C.May 22-26, 1997 Info: 1-800-94BLGPD

The Beach Party Mallibu, CAJuly 4-6, 1997 1-213-969-1619 DBATB@aol.com

Atlanta Gay Pride August 29-Sept 1, 1997

Brother to Brother Retreat Location to be announced Sept. 26-28, 1997 Info: 213-964-7828

Steamworks Hot and Anal A Safer Sex Playshop Sponsorerd By The AIDS Project of The East Bay Free Food, Videos, Passes May Be Available - Contact Kendrick Felder or Bill Stuart for more info@ 510-834-8181

Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Support Groups

Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Support Groups

Transgender Support Group (MTF) Every Tuesday 1:30pm - 3:00pm Brother`s Network 973 Market Suite 650 SF,CA

Glamour Dolls MTF Support group contact meets every third Tuesday in Oakland. Contact Deahanna Wallace @ 510-834-8181 for more details

House fo Hope African American Young men's support group Ages 16-24 meets every Wednesday at 7-9pm at APEB 651 20St. Oakland, CAakland. Contact Charlie Wilson @ 510-834-8181 for more details

Black Men's Rap Group for gay/bi African-American men. Wednesdays 7:15-8:30pm at the Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Ave., Berkely, CA. INFO: 548-8283

Lesbians of Color Support Group for all lesbian/bi Awomen of color. Thursday s7:00 - 8:30 pm at the Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Ave., Berkely, CA. INFO: 548-8283

Black Men's Xchange (BMX) Oakland Meets every Friday at 8:00pm AMASSI Inc. 351 15th St. Oakland, CA

Black Men's Xchange (BMX) Inglewood, CA Meets every Friday at 8:00pm The AMASSI Center Call Deshawn @ 310.281.7742

Black Women's Xchange (BWX) Meets every Friday at 8:00pm AMASSI Inc. 351 - 15th St. Oakland, CA

Men of All Colors Together Regular Monthly Events Call (415) 675-0201 San Francisco, CA

Gay Men Of African Decent Contact Don Jackson @212-420-0773 ext 13 New York City, NY

Black Gay Mens Rap Every Friday at 7pm Unity Fellowship Center 5149 W. Jefferson LA,CA

Group Trips

B'latino '97 Puerto Rico Trip June 2 -6, 1997 /5days / 4 nights approximately $600. Depart right after DC Blk Gay Pride! Contact: 202-728-3890 or email at MaleboxDC@aol.com

The Clublist

Northern, CA

CLUB RED, every Sunday night 9pm at Blondies; 540 Valencia SF hip-hop, dancehall, house w/dj's Evol-E and Olga T. REDLINE 415-339-8310 for women and their friends.A Kiss My Black Ass Production.

RED on the Waterfront, once a month 9pm at Jelly's; 295 China Basin Way Pier 50 SF. Dates booked Friday's March 14th, April 18th and May 23rd. Call REDLINE fo directions and more info 415-339-8310. for women and their friends. Another Kiss My Black Ass Production.

Club Q 1st Friday of every month - thousands of women in the west coast largest venue for women interracial crowd. House, R&B at Towsend between 2nd &3rd. eeee

Black Out Men & Women/Very Black - Friday`s 836 Mission SF,CA Soul Music & Urban House

Cabel's Reef Black crowd best nites Thursday, Friday and Saturday Dancing Hip Hop & House Down to earth 2272 Telegraph Ave Downtown Oakland Down to Earth Crowd No Cover Dancing 510-451-3777

The Comfort Zone 581 5th St. Downtown Oakland - Mostly Black women & men Hip Hop/ House/Funk
Saturday Nights Only $5 Before 10:30 / $7 After 10:30

The Bench & Bar Latin on Fridays Drag shows on Sunday - mostly black women and men. 11th and Oak in Oakland, CA

The Box Interracial crowd Thursday nights Hip House 715 Harrison, SF,CA

The Stud Interracial Crowd on Monday Nights Hip Hop/ House 9th & Harrison SF, CA

The End Up Interracial / Dancing House Dance Music best Sunday afternoons around 4pm 6th & Harrison SF, CA Cover

To send additional listings that feature African-American and/or Latino gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual crowds, Specify type of crowd (Womyn, Men Both, etc.), special nights, type of music, location and phone # if available to: Whazzup! Magazine Event & **Clublist P.O. Box 30993 Oakland, CA FAX: 510-836-4759 Email: Whazzup411@aol.com**

The Pendulum Interracial - The only bar in the Castro with a large black male population Almost always busy 4146 18th 415-863-4441

The White Horse 6551 Telegraph Watering Hole dancing on weekends 6551 Telegraph Ave., Oakland 510-652-3820

Steamworks Men`s Bathouse 510-845-8992 Best on weekends nights 2107 Fourth St. Berkely, CA

Southern, CA

The Catch One Womyn On Saturday Men On Fridays Mostly Black on Holiday Weekends 4067 Pico Blvd.Los Angeles, CA

The Lodge Mostly Black men on Saturday nights / Women`s Nights on Wednesday 4923 Lankershiem Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 818-769-7722

The Study Mostly Black No dancing Watering Hole 1723 N. Western Los Angeles 213-464-9551

The Annex Mostly Black No dancing Watering Hole 835 S. LaBrea Inglewood, CA 310-671-7323

The Midtown Spa Men`s Bathouse 213-680-1838 Best Nights on Tuesdays and on weekends 615 S. Kohler Los Angeles

Washington D.C.

The Bachelor's Mill Dance club downstairs / Pool Bar Upstairs busiest Thurs through Sat. 1104 8th St. Between the Navy Yard and the Marine Barracks 202-544-1931

The Edge / Wet 56 L St. S.E. House music on Saturday Nights mostly black men / **WET** Nude Male Multiracial dancers in showers / Bar

Nob Hill Black Bar with a little room to dance 1101 Kenyon St. N.W. Washington D.C. 202-797-1100

Tracks Best Crowd On Sunday nights Black men and women Volley ball court, dancing 1111 1st St. S.E. 202-488-3320

New York City

U-men U-sweat after work Thursdaze FREE B 4 9PM at the **Side Bar** 366 eight ave. at 28 and 29th st.

CLUBHOUSE Wednesday Nights Black Down to Earth Crowd/ Miniballs/ 215 W. 28th St. Near 8th ave. House Music, HipHop, Reggae Free B4 11pm
$8 After / 212-726-8820

Sound Factory Bar Saturday Nights / Black / Music By Dany Krivit and Trini /12 W 21st near 5th Ave. New York City 212 206 7770

HOME BOYZ HAVEN Saturday Nights at the sidebar 366 8th ave. Between 28TH N 29TH St.

The Monster Sunday Nights Mostly Latino & Black Men piano bar upstairs / dancing downstairs 56 Greenwich St. New York City 212-255-8787

Sugar Babies Monday`s Nights multiracial Strictly House on Irving Place of off 14th St. between 3rd and 4th Ave. New York City

Keller's - No Dancing Bar 384 West St. New York City Watering Hole

Two Potatoes 143 Christopher St. New York City - bar only some shows Watering Hole

Crazy Nanny's Mostly Women about half African American Video Bar and Dance Club 21 7th Ave. New York City 212-366-6312

Chicago

The Generator Friday & Saturdays House Fierce Music 306 N. Halstead Chicago,IL 312-243-8889

Atlanta

Loretta's
708 Spring St.
404-874-8125
Dance Music / Bar

The Palace
15 Simpson
404-522-3000.
R &B/House Music

Traxx 339 Marietta St. NW House from 11:00pm to 6:00am

The Marquette Lounge 809 Martin Luther King Dr N.W.

KARATS Jazz Club -Wednesdays though Sundays 511 Peachtree St. N.E.

Dallas, Texas

Traxx
House/ Hip Hip 90% Black
2821 St. Louis Fri., Sat., Sunday

The Metro Mostly black on weekends 2204 Elm St.

The Stars Are Bright For All to See

*Horoscopes By Dino

If the axiom, "As Above, So Below", is true then it should also be true that "We are on the inside what we reflect on the outside". It is for this reason that I have chosen to give personality analysis on the various signs this month so that you can see how they relate to the stars...The Stars That Are Bright For All To See.

Dear Enthusiastic Aries. Although famous Aries personalities include, Billy Holiday, Marvin Gaye and Sarah Vaugn, it is Paul Robeson who I call your attention to this month. He was both scorned and rebuked for his racial views. He convinced an unbelieving world that through enthusiasm, and persistance, blacks could excel, no matter what the endeavor, no matter what the odds. And what better proof than himself? A world class athlete, a distinguished scholar, an accomplished linguist, and a convincing actor, Robeson was culturally refined beyond his years. Paul Robeson always managed to ignite his peers with great enthusiasm. So Aries the lesson for you this month is be enthusiastic against all odds.

Taurean of Diversity, your Taurean Greats, Stevie Wonder the walking inspirationalist, Willie Mayes the Hall of Famer who was 2x Most Valued Player, as well as Joe Louis the Longest Reining World Heavy Weight Boxing Champion of the World (almost 12 years). I say hats off to you this month. This is indeed the time to dream and re-educate yourself. The human brain is a three-pound mental guide that is comprised of one-hundred billion soft, wet fragile cells. Even though it is small enough to balance in the palm of the hand, here resides the architecture of our experience and the mindscape of human thought. But how does this mass of tissue weave the human mind? Though it does not generate enough energy to illuminate a light bulb, the brain is still the most powerful energy source on earth. It is the center of every insight and invention, every vision and idea, every symphony, painting and poem.To paraphrase another Taurean great, William Shakespeare said, "This is truly the stuff of which dreams are made". So dream and diversify. You must if you are to be in any shape to deal with the world at large, so dream on Taraus.

Your Gemini Greats are Miles Davis, John F. Kennedy, and Marilyn Monroe. They have many blessings to give to you this month. Not only they, but George Washington Carver gives the best ideology of blessings for you. He often told the story of when he was a child his slave owner saw what he considered to be a good deal and sold him for a horse. He continues to say that that may have been the best thing that ever happened to him. Five years later, when freed by the Thirteenth Amendment, Carver faced all the disadvantages associated with poverty, race, and ignorance. Through all this adversity he was self educated and became one of the greatest scientist and inventors of our time. Well Gemini of many blessings, don't be to quick or harsh on judging your shortcomings, they may be blessings in disguise.

Cancer the difference maker. These cancer greats have indeed made a difference, Bill Bass, Tom Hanks, and Lena Horne. At this time I call your attention to the Cancerian Thurgood Marshall. Though he was barred from many law schools because of his race, he focused exclusively on making an impact in the courtrooms in America. Among the many differences that Thurgood made, he won 29 of the 32 civil rights cases he took, which propelled him to become one of the nations top lawyers. He argued successfully before the Supreme Court that racial segregation in the public schools was unconditional. In 1969 he became the first black to hold a position on that Supreme Court of Justice. Cancer keep in mind that this will be the month that you will make a great difference among others.

Leo's of significance, now here this. The Leo Greats like Count Basie, Robert De Niro, Madonna, and Fidel Castro. All had something of significance to contribute to our society but it is the great Leo Alex Haley the creator of the Historical book known as **Roots** that I summon your attention to. At one time in his life eighteen cents and two cans of sardines were the only thing that stood between him and starvation.Twenty years of his life had already been spent in the military. While serving as a cook in the Coast Guard, he used nights and free time to write letters for fellow enlistees to their wives and girlfriends back home. Men who were either illiterate or found it too difficult to express themselves - at least on paper - became routine customers. He didn't know it then, but his literary talents would eventually carry him to fame and fortune. Nine years after starting his complicated task of writing **Roots** he found himself $100,000 in debt, depressed and contemplating suicide. At his lowest point of despair, he met his greatest source of power - applied faith. Something rose up within greater than himself. Believing his book would be of enormous value he dismissed all notions of ending his life. **Roots** made Alex Haley a millionaire. Dear Leo the Significant, I can not begin to explain the ingenuity that you may have to put forth this month, but keep in mind that all that you do is significant.

Virgo the disciplined, the virgo greats, Edwin Moses ,Otis Redding,and Chief Mangosutha Buthelizi (the African Zulu Inkatha Party Leader) all represent the epitome of self-discipline, though it is Althea Gibson that demonstrates this through great will-power. On the New York inner-city streets she was introduced to a game closely resembling tennis. For the next decade her life consisted of eating, sleeping, and playing tennis. Later Althea Gibson became the first Black ever to capture the prestigious Wimbledon Cup symbolic of the game's best.Virgo to master the art of discipline this month will represent a prize that you will benefit from for a life-time. Remember working hard plus developing the right habits equal discipline.

Libra the courageous, the Librean Greats, Jesse Jackson, Mahatma Gandhi,and Augustus Ceaser (the first Roman emperor) have all done courageous things, but it was Ray Charles who my hat goes off to. Ray was told that he couldn't play the piano, and that he didn't know how to sing. At age six he went totally blind. Though he was blind he was not made to feel helpless. His mother would have no part in any self-pity. She told him, "Your blind, not stupid. You've lost your sight, not your mind." Ray never forgot his mother's words. Many times during his auditions he was told that he couldn't carry a note if his life depended on it, and that he surely couldn't play the piano. Nonetheless at seventeen he formed the "Ray Charles Group" with several other musicians. The group became one of the best small jazz ensembles in the country. One year later Ray hit the big-time. Libra courage comes from practice which is the mother of repetition. If you do the things that you fear the most often enough then you can succeed in scaring fear away.

Scorpio the Innovator, the list of Scorpion Greats could go on forever but a following are a few of the greats:TheodoreRoosevelt, Christopher Columbus, Grace Kelly,and Pele (the Brazilian Soccer Legend).Now Surely Scorpio you can be innovative enough this month to create some momentum for yourself. If not now, then when?

Sagittarius the Miracle Worker, the Sag. greats, Tina Turner, Jimi Hendrix,and Berry Gordy are Great, but it is Don King that I would like to bring to the center stage for you this month. Even as a youth King was successful at nearly everything he attempted. His outgoing personality and zest for life made him extremely popular. But fate intervened and gave him an unkindly shove. In 1967 one of his colleagues tried to cheat him and it placed him into a fight that cost him dearly. For the altercation King was sentenced to one to twenty years in the Ohio State Penitentiary. Within a four-year period King had read nearly every book in the Prison Library, transforming his goals and perception of himself in the process. In 1971, King was paroled with no money and even fewer skills. Open to any ideas, he heard of the plight of a local hospital that was on the verge of shutting its doors for lack of funds. King decided to get involved. He toyed with the idea of staging a boxing benefit featuring then World Heavy Weight Champion Muhammad Ali.From then on the rest was history in the making.Sag, you may call this story a stroke of luck, I consider it a miracle. So for all its worth I suggest you prepare yourself for a few miracles this month. All you need is to be in the right place at the right time.

Capricorn the Stranger, the following Capricorn Greats, Nostradamus,Rod Serling,and Carlos Casteneda were all indeed considered strange by some standards, but it was the great Capricorn Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. that represented the struggle to move a strange world such as his into a unified dream.By combining spiritual values and a deeply rooted belief in himself and the goodness of man, Dr. King infiltrated the consciousness of a nation and shook it at its roots, forging a racial bond. Actually, anyone who dares to dream and believe in his dreams is the creator, to a large extent, of his future. Though Dr. Kings's reality was a society of oppression and discrimination, his vision, ever so clear, was a world of love and mutual respect. Capricorn with the aid of imagination, no matter who how difficult transformation seems at this point, strange as it may seem anything is possible. Remember, It is difficult to say what is impossible, for the dream of yesterday is the hope of today and the reality of tomorrow.

Aquarius the Applicator, the great Aquarians, Oprah Winfrey, Mozart,and Franklin D. Roosevelt all applicated great ingenuity to the community at large, although it is Langston Hughes that I find applicable to the profile for you this month. So talented was he that the literary world referred to him as "Shakespeare in Harlem." Being black and poor did not distract Hughes from realizing his ultimate resource - hope for the future. The greatest resources of the world today are not those that lie beneath the earth. Natural resources such as oil, platinum and even gold, when compared to the resources that each of us has at our disposal, are paled by comparison, and Hughes applicated this to the fullest. Great Aquarian, your ingenuity this month is needed more than ever to withstand the pressures of work and home, so like a good computer program, a good applicable system is worth its weight in gold. When going gets tough, the tough get going.

Pisces the Worker, your Picean greats, Copernicus (Discovered that the Earth revolves around the sun), Sidney Poiter,and Nancy Wilson.All I have to say is that this month you will have to work your buns off. Pisces, work may be something that you aren't afraid of but as Yoda so dramatically put it to Luke Skywalker as he was going to Fight Dark Vader, "You will be, you will be afraid". And by the way, "Happy Birthday". Now go to work!

Whazzup! Magazine Classified Ads

African American LesBiGay Professionals-
Present your business cards with style and class with the mini business card briefcase. The standard mini case holds up to 20 business cards. The womens version, which comes with a mirror, can hold up to 7 credit cards and a drivers license as well as business cards. For more info on prices and colors visit our web site at : www.gatewayads.com/42996/minicase.html or send name and address to: Lillie Bells Gift Shop, 1132 Cortlandt st., Peekskill, Ny 10566

"The Bliss of Becoming One!" is available on-line from Amazon.com, IFGE, PM Publishers, bookstores (ask for ISBN 1-56825-031-2), by credit card at 1-800-356-9315 and by check/money order for $15.95 postpaid from Rainbow Books, Inc. PO Box 430, Highland City, FL 33846-0430.

The Adodi Muse: A Gay Negro Ensemble (Performance Poets) andThe Adodi Muse: An Outsiders Collective (Writers of All Genres) *Membership Inclusively Limited to Black, Gay MenP.O. Box 92097 Atlanta, GA 30314 E-mail: adodimuse1@aol.com Please address any questions or concerns to Malik M.L. Williams at one of the above addresses.

Gay Bar Lifestyle Stories Needed For Anthology Journalist Charles Michael Smith invites submissions of short fiction, poetry, essays, photographs, and artwork to be considered for " At The Old Place", an anthology about gay and lesbian bar culture.

Topice will include how to choose a bar, how to cruise in a bar, gay bars and the past, the backroom bar (experiences), alcoholism in the gay community, my first time in a gay bar, the bar in gay literature, gay bars across the United states and in foriegn countries, etc.
Submit up to 3 essays and short stories: 10 photos slides, and/or photocopies of artwork: 5 poems. Each literary submission should be sent duplicate *with* a self addressed stamp (SASE).

Submissions Lacking SASE cannot be returned. A short biography should accompany all submissions. Writers, artist and photographers who's work appear in the anthology will recieve a one time only honorarium and two copies of the book. Please send original published and/or unpublished work to Charles Micheal Smith at 1864 7th Avenue, Apt. 5, New York, New York 10026.

Employment

Transgender AIDS HEALTH EDUCATOR: Provide community outreach, one to one HIV/AIDS health education, and/or facilitate group risk reduction sessions to tg community and their partners in Alameda County. Must have HIV educational outreach experience & legitimate knowledge of African American Transgender culture. Part time-20hrs per week. Salary mid teen's . APEB-personnel; 651 20th Street; Oakland, CA 94612

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THE
TRAVEL
PAGE

AIRLINE TAX REINSTATED

by Ron Fulcher

Post-Tax Fare Sales

Two fare sales have broken out since the new tax took effect, partially softening its impact. America West is offering discounts of up to 25 percent off its usual 14-day advance-purchase fares, with an additional $50 off on night flights. Discounts vary, with the best deals available for travel on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. The last day to buy sale tickets is 25 March, with the last day to travel 30 September for most tickets and 4 November for nighttime fares.

US Airways, for one, promptly matched the America West offer on routes where the two compete, and other airlines can be expected to do the same. In addition, airlines are offering a variety of deals on companion travel in response to an initiative by Southwest. US Airways, for example, is charging half price for one ticket in a pair when two people travel together on selected routes, provided that the two buy their tickets three days ahead of time and stay at their destination at least one night. The deal covers travel through 22 July.

Selective Exceptions

There are exceptions here and there to the underlying, general move to a 4 percent increase in total ticket prices. Delta Air Lines, for example, is not adding anything to full coach fares on flights between either Atlanta or Cincinnati and either New York or Washington D.C., or between Atlanta or Cincinnati and any other city less than 1,500 miles distant. Its low-cost spin-off, Delta Express, also is absorbing the full tax into its fares.

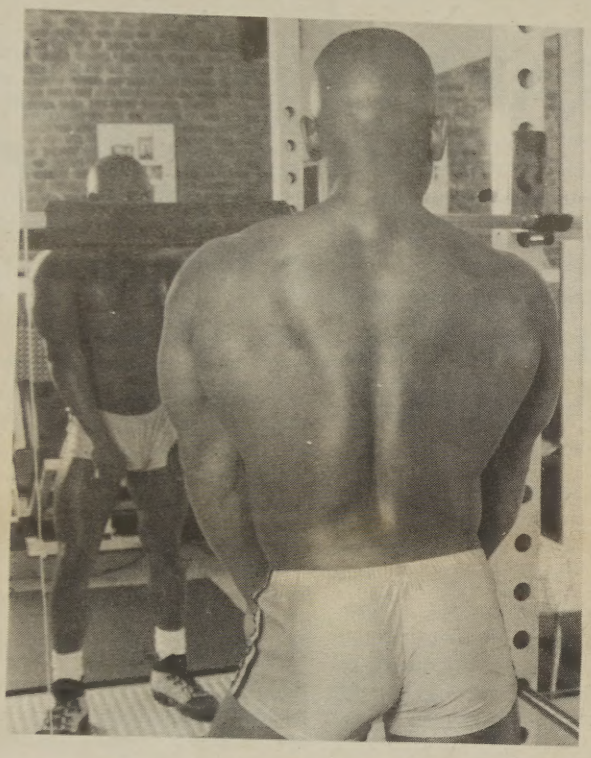
Along with the tax on domestic tickets, a $6 tax on international departures also went into effect last week; the airlines immediately and uniformly began collecting that fee on international tickets.

No Retroactivity

Tickets issued before 7 March for travel after the tax took effect are not subject to the fees, unless the traveler makes a change that requires the ticket be reissued. The tax expires 30 September and will be collected for all tickets sold until then, even if they are for travel later. If the tax isn't renewed, then travelers will be able to obtain refunds for taxes paid on travel that takes place after the expiration date.

For travel reservations, group travel, international, domestic, cruises, and meeting planning please call me at:
(510) 268-1064 or Email:
successtravel@msn.com

TORCH '97



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N. Calif prof BM, 33,5'9",170, straight-acting seeks other BM for hanging out and possibly more. Self GIF available. I'm into movies, theater, music. You be similar. An aggressive bottom is a plus! E-mail: **topbm@crunch.hayward.ca.us**

Mature, attractive, GBM, tall, dark, handsome with diverse cultural interest seeks gentle, loving, BM partner. I'm 39, 5'11", 205, 8X6, dark muscular, soft spoken. I prefer and attract masculine yet vulnerable men who are intelligent and honest, creative and individualistic. If you're also non-smoking, HIV- and very well built, we could have possibilities. Letters to: **P.O.. Box 59111, Philadelphia, PA 19102-9111**

GBM, 5'11'", slender physique, conservative appearance, HIV-neg, bottom into reading, movies, travel. ISO, GBM, HIV-neg, top, employed, with an interest in possible long-term relationship. Northern Virginia a plus! Respond to **IMN2UBM@AOL.COM**

I am a deep Chocolate Brothertop seeks masc brother or fem sister to spend quiet evenings with in Bay Area. Friendship first. E-mail to **BlWonderer@aol.com**

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GWM, 6', bl/bl, 185, muscular, 41, who thinks Black truly is beautiful. Wants to meet GBM of similar age and build. Letters to **Box 227, 2011 K St. NW, DC 20006**

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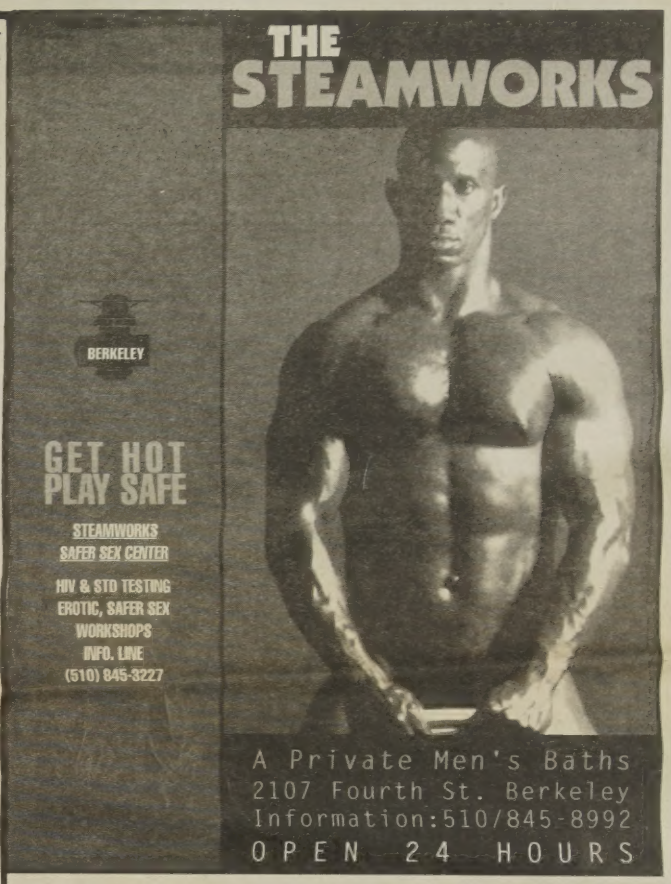
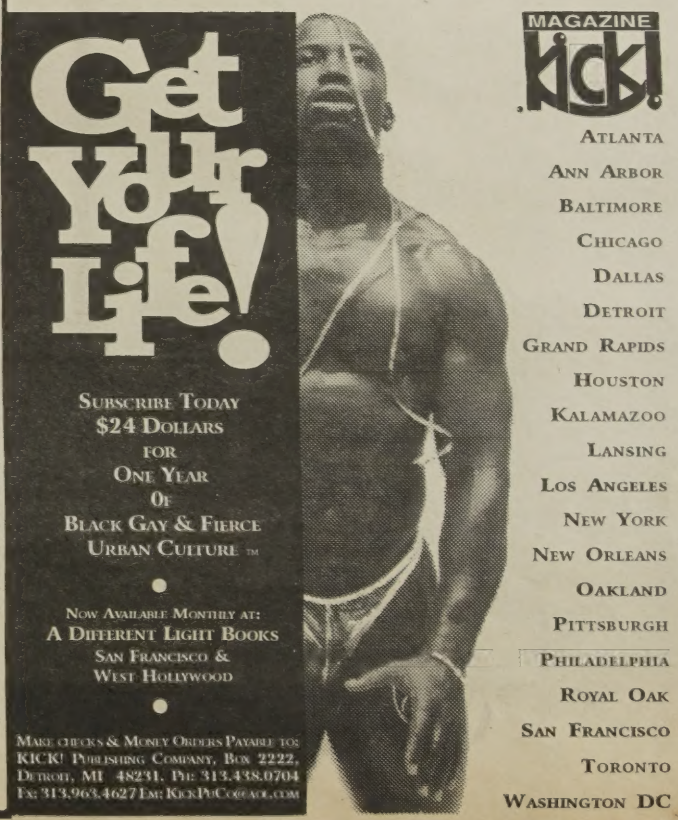
GBM, CPA, 27, 5'11", nicely shaped muscular physique, top, medium brown, attractive, HIV-neg. I enjoy movies, scrabble, bowling, and romantic evenings with vintage R&B and jazz with someone special, ISO attractive, smart, HIV-neg GBM who's goal oriented, yet easy going and sensitive. Please no pretenders, bar flies, or overly-effeminate men. E-Mail: **MDCLASSACT @aol.com**

GBM, 38, 5'11" into fantasies. Tell me yours and I'll tell you mine. Send e-mail response to:**dmgoodmn@aol.com**





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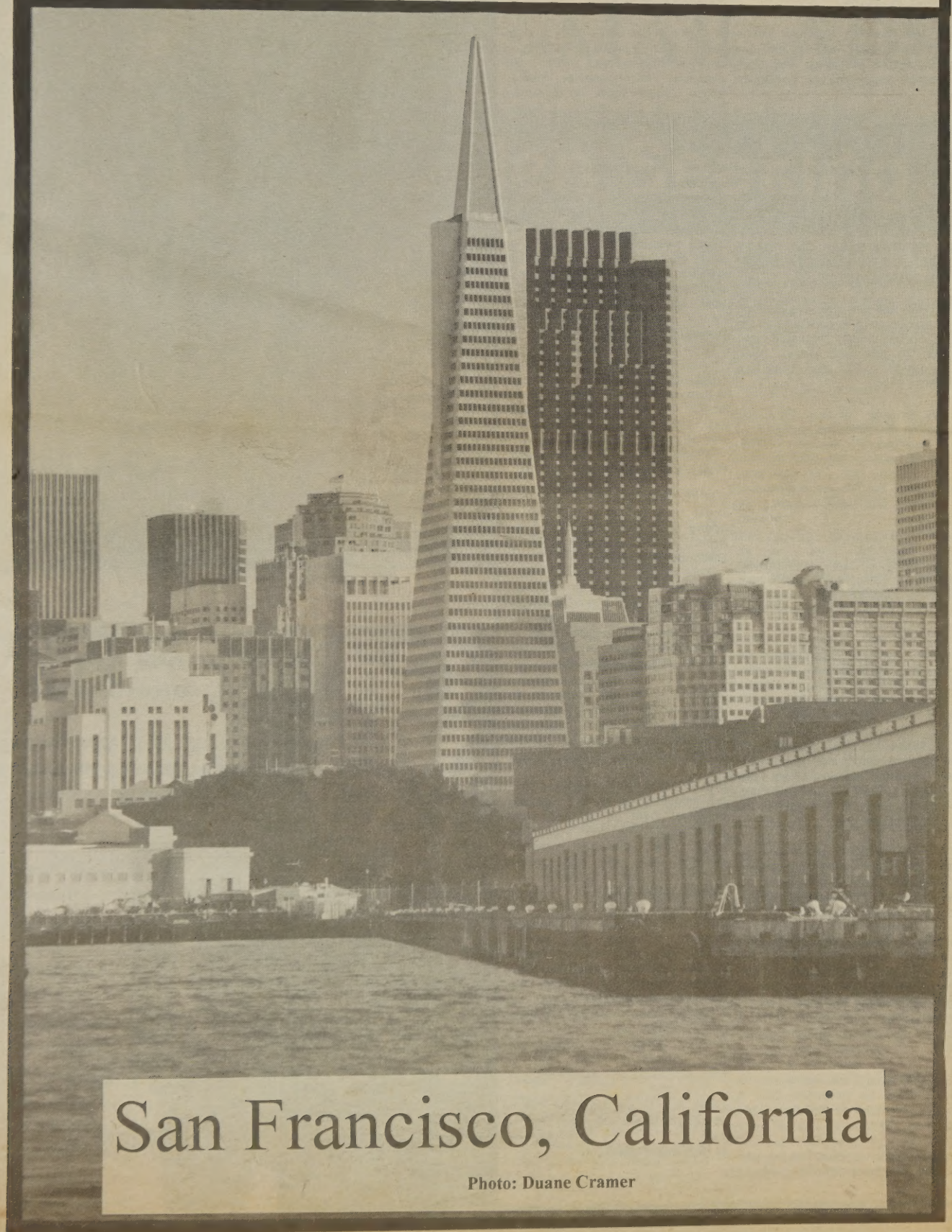

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Volume One - Issue 8 December 1996

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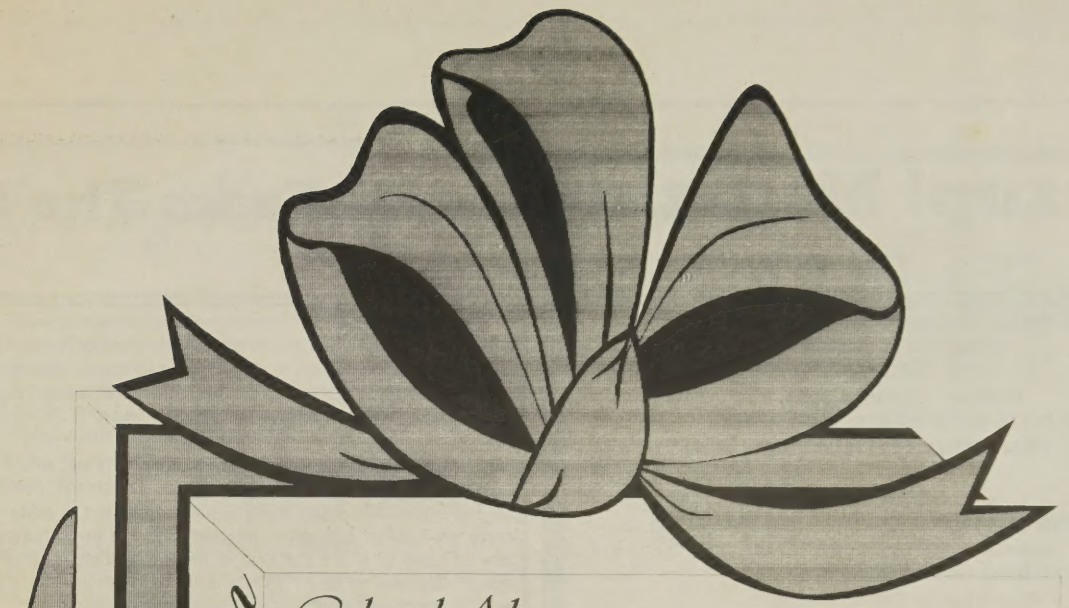

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Whazzup! Magazine

All letters and comments welcome:
Whazzup! Magazine
P.O. Box 30993
Oakland, CA 94604-3693
VOICE: 510.836.4759 FAX: 510.836.4758
EMAIL: Whazzup411@aol.com

Staff
Editor / Publisher - Stephen Johnson
Associate Editor - Leyla Farah
Political Editor - David Simmons
Travel Editor-Cocoa Walther
Staff Diva - Norman Packer
Local Marketing Coordinator - Demetres Munford

Advertising & Sales Representatives:

Concept and Design Marketing - Local & National
2501 Ivy Drive Suite 19
Oakland, CA 94606
VOICE: 510.836.4759 FAX: 510.836.4758
EMAIL: Whazzup411@aol.com

Rivendell Marketing Company - National
212.242.6863

John Brisbane - Oakland / Bay Area
Norman Packer - Oakland / Bay Area
Lawrence Denson - Los Angeles / Southern California
Cseneca Parker - Los Angeles / Southern California

Editorial Contributors:

Norman Packer
Sharyn Greyson
MacArthur Flournoy
Dino
Cocoa Walther
John James
John Montgomery
Kory McGuire
Stephen Johnson
Electronic Urban Report (EUR)
Kevin Nash
Audrey Player

Cover & Centerfold Photography:
Jamal Blair

Photography:
Hopeton Stewart

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Letter From The Editor

A friend, upon hearing a Christmas song said to me, "Oh, Already! I can't believe they're beginning to play that Xmas music already. I **HATE** Christmas." I made no effort to cheer him up because, even though my views on Christmas are not the same, I could see his point of view.

Why should we look forward to a time of year when we a pressured to redecorate our homes (almost always at a cost);eat food that is guaranteed to put inches on our waist; purchase and mail out holiday cards; call all of the family we haven't spoken to all year; pretend to be happy and buy numerous gifts for others? Is it surprising to think that many people will find the holiday season depressing as it reminds them of loved ones that they can't be near or joyful Christmases past that will never come again?

In years past, I have been programmed by the media to actually feel guilty if I didn't go out and buy gifts for every one who meant something to me. I'll never forget the years I went out and bought gifts for almost everyone I knew. For some reason I thought that giving to others (who I new could give me nothing in return) would fill me with a great happiness. I was wrong.The one thing that I expected in return for the gifts that I gave was happiness. The only thing I got was a moment of gratitude and a feeling of emptiness. Now I ask myself, "What can I do to make sure that doesn't happen again." I always tell myself, " I am not going to do this shit again next year. Next year eventually comes and I end up doing the same thing. Now I ask you, do I need a shrink or what?

I believe that I am a hopeless Christmasholic in search of recovery. So this year I am going to follow the twelve steps of Christmasholics Anonymous. I'll share them with you. I am told that if I practice these steps faithfully I will be relieved of my addiction to Christmas.

The Twelve Steps Of Christmasholics Anonymous

1.I admitted that I was powerless over Christmas and my life became unmanageable
2. I came to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity
3. I made a decision to turned my will and life over to God as I understood him
4. I made a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself
5. I admitted to God, to myself, and to another human being the exact nature of my wrongs.
6. I was entirely ready to have God remove this defects of character.
7. I humbly asked him to remove my shortcomings
8. I made a list of all the people I had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. I made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. I continue to take personal inventory and when I am wrong I promptly admit it.
11. I sought though prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with God as I understand him, praying only for knowledge of his will for me and the power to carry it out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of this steps, I tried to carry this message to other Christmasholiscs. and to practice these principles in all my affairs.

This sounds like a big order and I can't do it all at once. I didn't become addicted in one day so I'll remember easy does it. I am hoping that one day I will realize that the message of Christmas is not about all of the external things. Maybe I will learn to be giving, loving, kind and spiritual on every day not just on the 25th of December. Or maybe I'll just start to celebrating Kwanzaa.

Merry Christmas
Habari Gani?
Peace and Love

Stephen Johnson
Editor Whazzup! Magazine

Celebrating Kwanzaa

-Norman Packer

Kwanzaa means the first fruits of harvest. It is celebrated from December 26 through January 1. It is not a substitute for Christmas, yet, it is a unique holiday that pays tribute to the rich cultural roots of African American ancestry. Please note that Kwanzaa may be adapted to your own personal lifestyle or budget.

Kwanzaa was introduced in the United States in the mid 60's by Dr. Moulana Ron Karenga. Dr. Karenga searched for an African language that represented all Africans to explain the Kwanzaa holiday. He chose Swahili, an East African language that is not tied to any specific group or tribe.

As African Americans are abandoning their negative self images and starting to adapt natural hairstyles and traditional dress wear, the desire for ties to our African past has increased. Kwanzaa has become the ideal forum for exploring these cultural roots, while recognizing the unique heritage of African Americans as products of the both worlds (African & American).

How is Kwanzaa Celebrated?

Each day and night of Kwanzaa when family and friends meet, we ask,"Habari Gani?" (What is the news?) And for the date we hear the answer which is one of the seven principles developed by Dr. Karenga.

There is usually a larger celebration that is held at the beginning (Umoja). A Kinara (candle holder) stands in a prominent place at the celebration site. It holds seven candles. Each day as Kwanzaa progress one of the candles are lit. The candles symbolize the seven principles. One black candle is placed in the center (Umoja - Unity), three red candles are placed on the left (Representing the struggle), three green on the right (represent a green future)

Other celebrations may progress to the final day of celebration which begins with a candle light vigil and prayer. This ceremony opens up for discussion, questions and answers (dialogue) in a meditative environment known as Imani. The idea is to carry each of the principles of Kwanzaa throughout the year.

At some point during the celebrations the people meeting may party, exchange gifts, sing, dance and eat.

The Seven Days And Principles Of Kwanzaa

December 26 - **Umoja** (Unity) To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.

December 27 - **Kujichagulia** (Self Determination) To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves instead of being defined, named, created for and spoken for by others.

December 28 - **Ujima** (Collective Work and Responsibility) To build and maintain our community together and make our sisters and brothers problems our own. To solve our problems together.

December 29 - **Ujamaa** (Cooperative Economics) To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together.

December 30 - **Nia** (Purpose) To make our collective vocation to the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

December 31 - **Kuumba** (Creativity) To do always as much as we can in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

January 1 - **Imani** (Faith) To believe with all our hearts... in our people, our parents, our children, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Habari Gani? My Brothers and Sisters, Ashé .

*For further information on Kwanzaa events contact Norman Packer (Staff Diva) @ 510-836-4759

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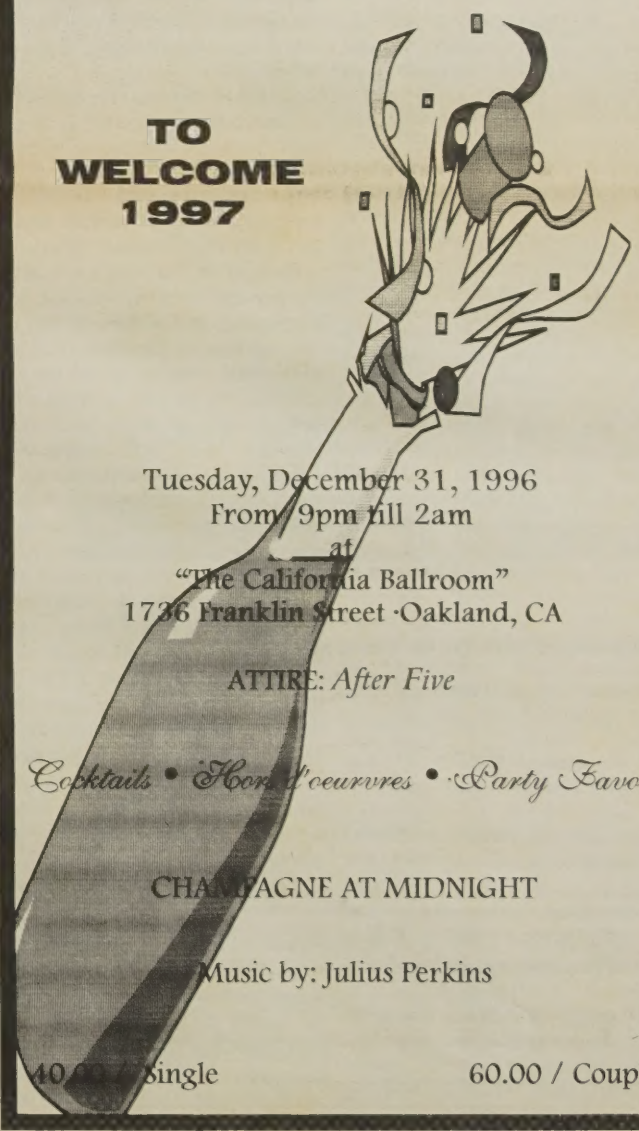

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Participating In Our Lives

By MacArthur Flournoy

MacArthur Flournoy

I will not participate in my own oppression. - Brenda McKay - Warrior, Woman, Outreach Worker and Sister-Friend

Much like any other Sunday, I was seated in the front row of the sanctuary, reflecting on the songs of praise and worship that we had just sung. I anticipated a powerful message of hope, spiritual fulfillment, and the charge to press on in the face of adversity. I had been a member of this particular congregation for more than nine years. From this very pulpit I had heard hundreds of messages, married my wife, named my children and had been commissioned as a missionary to be sent abroad to West Africa. Still, nothing could have prepared me for the content of the message that was to come. I do not remember the scriptural basis for the message, nor do I remember the theme of the sermon. What I do remember is the statement made to the effect that "... We need to stop wasting all this money on AIDS research ... and accept the will of God." Before having a chance to recover from what felt like a swift kick to the scrotum, some members of the congregation offered affirmations in the form of "Amen," "all right" and "Tell it preacher." There I sat. Front row. Humiliated. Shamed. Immobilized by fear. HIV positive. And, worst of all, silent!

We have all known moments in our lives when another person stood before us to say that for whatever reason [we] were less and [they] were more. The declaration may have come in the form of racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia, or AIDS-phobia or pure power-tripping. The effect is always the same. Someone is left questioning their worth as a human being and their right to exist on this planet. We have come to understand that oppression is not always aggressive or overt. More often than not, it takes the form of subtlety, beguiling, cloaked in the guise of "good intentions." For reasons that are complex and not easily understood, many accept oppression for the moment. As I sat in that congregation on that Sunday morning three years ago, I was wounded by the statement that was made. Some time later, I came to understand that such a remark could only be rooted in hate and ignorance of true love. But, in grappling with the statement, I had to look at myself. Did I play a role in my own oppression? There comes a time in our lives that is majestic, when we declare with the authority of life and breath that we will not participate in our own oppression. It is to that proclamation that I affirm amen and amen.

Too often we have stood by the side lines as spectators, watching the world go by. I am convinced that this is neither our destiny nor the divine will for our lives. What we experience in our lives certainly impacts how we feel, think, live and relate to one another. However, life is teaching me that more important than the experience is my response to the experience. An example of this is the fact that I am HIV positive. As I see it, being HIV positive is not my major problem. My greatest challenge is how I deal with this potentially deadly disease on a daily basis. Will I cringe in fear, grieve in silence, anesthetize the pain with drugs and alcohol. Or do I step up to the plate like millions before me have done to declare that challenge is nothing new to people of African descent. While literally millions have died on the bottoms of ships after being abducted from West Africa and bought to this country, there were those that survived. We are the sons an daughters of the survivors. In deference to those that lose their lives and to those that survived the middle passage - so too must we survive the oppression of the day, be it AIDS, violence, misogyny or any other oppressive force.

Trangender A Victim of Hate Crime

African American Lesbian, gays, bisexuals and transgendered persons recently gathered in Oakland to celebrate the beauty of our community. Many members of our community expended a tremendous amount of energy coordinating an event the was to be fun informational, entertaining, and affirming, However, outside the building a Transgender male (FTM) was struck in the head with a bat. This vile and cowardly act of violence visited upon this unfortunate man, was not merely a random act of violence against an individual, but in fact an assault on all of us. Perhaps even more strange was the silence of the incident. No Media coverage. No community coordination efforts. Just silence. In our silence we participate in the oppression of our community, giving the perpetrator of violence permission to further dehumanize our lives and slaughter our dignity in the streets. This will NEVER do!

Unprecedented HIV Treatments are at Hand

Within our nation, there is a national discussion around the possibility the most effective treatment seen to date for HIV disease. Protease inhibitors are **not a cure**, but bring unprecedented promise. Now the discussion is around who should have access to these drugs. Do "we" (medical and social service community) distribute these drugs immediately to every one who has a need for them or do "we" only distribute these drugs to people we think would take them as prescribed, for fear of a greater public health risk occurring by the development of resistant strands of HIV. Whose decision is this? Whose guidelines or ethics will be observed in making these life and death decisions? Without exception African Americans and Latinos are proportionately at the greatest risk. However, our role in these discussions have been virtually non-existent. If We are silent on this issue we speak death to ourselves, our families and our communities at large.

In an article published by the New York Times, November 10, 1996, Andrew Sullivan writes: "The vast majority of HIV positive people in the world, and a significant minority in America, will have no access to the expensive and effective new drug treatments now available. And many African Americans - especially Blacks and Latinos - will still die." Our silence lack of presence and absence of participation at the national, federal. State and local level is tantamount to complicity in our own murder, rendering our death suicide. Must we participate in our own oppression?

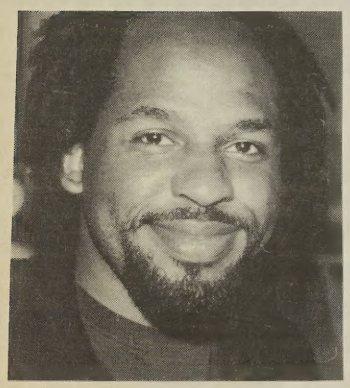
If there is to be a future in our experience that values, affirms, and honors our lives, we cannot entrust this work to any other entity than ourselves. We would be well served by having sincere and thoughtful discussions in our homes, places of recreation and communities around such issues as values, belief systems, ways of being and other powerful topics. Billboards and posters are only marginally effective in genuinely changing and shaping behavior. We need a dialogue that transitions us from the safety of billboards and posters to the reality of what takes place in Lake Merritt after dark, or what occurred in front of that building when one of our brothers was struck in the head with a bat. Oppression has many forms, and we must "Out" it, regardless of its appearance. If we forfeit our opportunity and responsibility by leaving such discussion up to chance, then we allow others to determine our reality for us and consequently relinquish our personal power to those who may not have our best interest at heart.

In this hour we need one another. Lesbians, gays, transgendered persons and bisexuals - all of us clinging to the notion that beyond this moment lies the possibility of a solution to whatever we are facing - if we would but come together. Violence, misogyny, "diva-syndrome", internalized racism and internalized homophobia are the remains of oppression sickness. These conditions serve to enslave us. They are not consistent with true Afrocentric values and traditions. These are not our weapons. This is not our way. As we approach the holiday season, may I suggest that we observe the customs and traditions that engender hope in our community, faith in our creator and love for ourselves.

Contrary to what that minister (I once respected) had hoped for, AIDS research continues. Today I benefit from state of the art medical treatment as a result. I just may live long enough to hold my grandchildren and tell them of a scourge that plagued our community a long time ago. I will tell them of how lesbians, gays, bisexual, transgenders and heterosexuals stood up to be counted as those who would not be silent, refusing to yield to intimidation or recoil in shame. I will tell my grandchildren of the rich tradition of our people: There once lived a people bold and strong whose battle cry was "Surely, I will not participate in my own oppression." And I was there in their midst. Godspeed!

MacArthur Flournoy is the prevention Director for the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. Written or verbal responses welcome. Attn. MacArthur Flournoy @ 10 united Nations Plaza, Suite 430, San Francisco, CA 94102 (415) 487-3049

Coming to Thirty



Notes From A Brother Friend
By Robert Wesley

What kind of man am I?

It's a question I went over one Saturday December evening, four months before my thirtieth birthday. I had just gotten in from LA only hours before, from an internet rendezvous that ended in a bust: arguments, sex, isolation, sex, confusion, arguments, intimacy, tears, conversation and an early ride back to LAX, followed by hours of waiting for the Red Eye to the Chocolate City via Pittsburgh. Somewhere over Kansas, or maybe Chicago, I decided upon celibacy; to tithe and become debt-free; and to continue my four-week run of not smoking weed.

That introspective and solitary evening, I concluded that I would probably always give in to the possibility of loving someone I find desirable; that I would always risk "it" -- whatever "it" was, whoever "it" was. The human side of me needed to be touched, I summed; needed caring and supportive words whispered in my ears; needed shoulders upon which to lean and cry.

With only a short few months left in which to claim my twenties, I remained intimately alone, a man without a mate, turning in to bed each night in a home bought and paid for by the sweat and sacrifice of two parents married for nearly thirty-five years.

After my second exodus from that house where, along with my sister, I was raised -- and three deserted apartments later -- I found myself once more living within the financial security of my middle class roots; on a street where for over 25 years my next-door neighbor has held the key to our front door, where shiny and seductive cars wait in long driveways next to manicured lawns. These were the same streets on which, as a youth myself, I kicked and dodged balls thrown to me -- and at me. The children of the kids I once played with now look at me with stranger-like eyes, for they own the sidewalks now.

My "life" was lived elsewhere, though my routine remained there, within that first-level bathroom, in that yellow kitchen, and more-often-than-not in that blue carpeted rectangle affectionately known as "my room." And there also was my "mind": gone from the familiarity of passing yet another summertime from the tiled patio out back, amidst the orchestra of color and smell given off by the azaleas, lilacs, tulips and daisies -- every stem of them all nurtured by the hand of my father. From this landscape where all of my needs were met, I wished to escape yet again.

A good brother-friend and fellow artist, Fred, had offered me a room in his group house, and as I sat at home that same night, processing my life, I weighed also the consequence of once more leaving the nest where I'd grown to manhood.

The next day, I dropped by the large Park Road rowhouse, nestled only a minute's walk from Rock Creek Park. The room in question was way too small; the house, filthy. I can do better! As we drove to Brothers Cafe on neighboring Connecticut Avenue, I told him that it wasn't an ideal move for me. He said he understood.

Back at Fred's, we settled in on the second-floor patio overlooking the fenced-in backyard, sipping our steaming Lattes and catching up on one another's lives. Time spent with this brother was always savored, and over our seven-year friendship, I'd come to respect and admire his intellect, wit and talent a great deal. As I shared with him the loneliness and confusion I was feeling over not being part of a committed two-some, another brother-friend, "Max", unexpectedly showed up at the gate on his bike.

Surely our smiles and laughter rose with the sun that morning, as the three of us shared the life challenges we were then facing. "Max" -- the trio's youngest and my childhood friend since age 14 -- had only a year earlier shared with me his HIV-positive status; a fact he'd withheld since being diagnosed in 1988; Fred -- the eldest of us all -- was stuck in a professional rut and felt a deep lack of motivation to create a fresh artistic start in New York, a relocation he had talked about making for nearly six years; and there I was, emptily approaching thirty and constantly feeling that life was passing me by, that I should be doing more with myself and be further along on my dreams.

It wasn't long before Fred popped a tape into the boombox and the thumping sounds of "Get Free (Brothers & Sisters)" was blaring through the speakers, lifted by the sway of the trees into the blue sky. I had written the up-tempo song the year before, and had more recently played a demo of it for Fred, who added some lyrics and re-recorded the lead vocals -- with me singing back-up. The groove immediately caught "Max", and he snapped his fingers and danced like there was nobody watching. He wore on his white t-shirt a hand-painted image of his own creation. His was a fabulous artistic talent! A recovering drug addict with more than a year of sobriety, "Max" has had his share of difficulties -- and watching him painstakingly turn his life around has been an inspiration. It was good to see him happy, and I felt joyous at having contributed to a small part of his liberation that day. These were my boys; the closest thing to family I have outside of the blood ties that bind.

(Notes continued on pg 9)

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Excerpt from ***the delta:***

"...Elect Lady Shirley Caesar was preaching now, her scratchy alto delivering the fiery sermonette to a driving House beat.

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"You can't tell me that I dance too much!"
"Hold my mule. I'll shout right here!!!"

The children had lost it - or found it one. It was 12:01 AM and the doors of the church were open. Freaking. Vouging. Freestyling. Truly, the Saints were marching in...

Excerpt from ***karnal karma:***

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Must Be The Music...

AZ YET

From Left to Right: Dion, Kenny, Marc, Shawn, Darryl

-Electronic Urban Report

Az Yet is making a big impact with their single "Last Night" off their debut album and "The Nutty Professor Soundtrack." The quintet hails from Philadelphia and has been kicking around, in one form or another, since 1990. The two original members are Shawn Rivera and Dion Allen. Kenny Terry, Darryl Anthony and Marc Nelson joined the group along the way. When Az Yet's demo landed in the hands of Babyface's mother-in-law, Jacqueline, it was a matter of moments before the group landed a LaFace Records contract.

"She gave us a call and told us if we sounded half as good on tape as we did live, she had a deal for us."

When Jacqueline came to hear AZ Yet perform live she brought Babyface with her. "We were kind of taken aback," the group says. "It was an impromptu sort of listening party for her and 'Face. And that's how we were discovered."

If group member Marc Nelson's name rings a bell, it's because he was one of the original members of Boyz II Men. He left the group just before they blew up to pursue a solo career. He put out an album in 1991 on Capitol Records that didn't launch him on the path to stardom. Marc kicked around the music industry working on other projects until he met Shawn and Dion. All along, even when we interviewed him 5 years ago, Marc says he has no regrets about leaving Boyz II Men.

"We all met Michael Bivins. From that moment on different things transpired. They went their way I went my way," Nelson said. "Obviously the Boyz II Men situation wasn't meant for me. So give or take 4 years, I had decided that I'm not Boyz II Men, I'm Marc Nelson. And now I'm Az Yet. Boyz II Men are Boyz II Men, and we are who we are. I've established that in my heart."

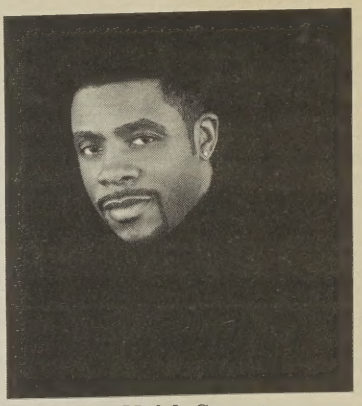
Babyface says, "Az Yet is one of the most talented groups to ever come along. When they sing, it becomes magic. This group is destined for success. Not only can they sing, but they also write, produce and arrange. Az Yet is unique in that their mix of influences and flavor defies labeling. I am happy to be associated with them."

Babyface is correct. The various influences of R&B, jazz, blues, hip hop, and gospel that flavor their music is why the group was originally known as "As Yet Untitled." says Shawn Rivera, "We found it hard to label ourselves because we enjoy singing and performing so many different styles." Echoes Kenny Terry, "We originally used the name, Az Yet Untitled, to describe our style, which is ever-growing and all-encompassing."

Dance HIT LIST

D.J. Ben at the Lodge in Los Angeles, CA

1. **"Keep Pushin" - Boris Dlugosch**
2. **"Chuck" - TekSoul Dr. Sid**
3. **Hallelujah - Kerri Kaoz Chandler**
4. **Only You Remix - 112**
5. **Rumway - Robbie Tronco**
6. **Respect - The Republic**
7. **No Diggity Remix - Black Street**
8. **Loungin - LL Cool J**
9. **Let's get down - Tony, Toni, Tone Featuring DJ Quick**
10. **Aw Yeah - Chupacabra**



Keith Sweat

will be performing on tour with Deborah Cox and MISTA.

If you happened to miss Keith before, or was just in the wrong city at the wrong time, well, here he comes once again to bring it on...

His current single, "Nobody", featuring Athena Cage, is a Top Ten hit. "Twisted", the first single which topped the Pop and R&B charts for weeks, features background vocals from protégés Kut Klose (discovered by Keith). Keith Sweat's now double platinum album has remained at the top of the charts for 17 weeks.

KEITH SWEAT TOUR DATES

November 30 • Las Vegas, NV • The Joint
December 1 • Oakland, CA • Paramount
December 3 • Salt Lake City, UT • Cottonwood Aud.
December 6 • Pine Bluff, AR • Boutwell Auditorium

Notes From a Brother Friend

(Continued from pg 7)

Over a month later, I remained contemplative: running from the questions I feared most -- toward answers that could only provide temporary relief. The symptoms were all around me: I wasn't motivated to exercise (so I didn't); I took to smoking weed once more; I drank alcohol more frequently than had ever been my custom; and I began to forego daily Bible reading for long and expensive hours of cruising the internet for companionship. On top of all that, I developed a cold that lingered longer than any I'd had before. More and more, I found myself looking for comfort in a joint -- and not in Jesus. It became increasingly hard to go to work. When I was there, my conversation was replete with complaints. I felt I was losing hold of my carefully-sculpted public image. I had made the debilitating mistake of letting others see that they could pull my strings.

The myth that I was perpetually optimistic was cracking.

The mask was slipping.
Soon it would break.
It wasn't supposed to be like this! This is not what my life looked like when I was fifteen and dreaming. How could it be, that I had grown into such a narcissistic person? Totally self-absorbed: always writing in the first person; speaking in the first person. Is this what is borne from years at the front? Or from years at the back? Or from years in the middle?

Washington's January Blizzard of '96 fell outside my second-story window pane -- and I inside sat alone, pondering the incessant need to better plan my days -- to work harder at moving closer to my dreams. Even there, in that complicated and complex state of mind; even in that place where I seldom do anything right and most things wrong (or so I tell myself); even in that space where I am for-the-most-part in a self-imposed prison of self-doubt and profound disappointment, bordering on an overwhelming sense of unhappiness; even there, I'd add up my blessings: I have a good job that pays me well. I've got good health. I have few bills. A place to stay. Clothes to wear. Food to eat.

I began eating more.
That's 'cuz I began smoking more, though. See? The dreads I grew dropped to my ears and began to swing infrequently within my peripheral vision.

In early February, I flew back to LA -- this time on company business. A second attempt at fusing life into that internet romance proved frustrating and futile. By the end of the month, I had once again sworn off my vices: I don't want to do drugs anymore. I don't even want to drink coffee, or de-caffeinated tea, or alcohol. I want to remain as healthy as I possibly can, and take care of myself. I won't let anything drag me down to nothingness. I'm stronger than that. Four days after recording those words in my journal, I engaged in a string of casual sexual encounters; for one brief instant, I placed my unprotected penis some place where it didn't belong. Shortly thereafter, I awakened in the middle of one night scared, fearful, dreading the thought that I might be carrying the HIV virus. I could only be nudged back to sleep by the Biblical proverb: A calm and undisturbed mind and heart is life and health to the body.

A still, small voice had been telling me for some time to go into a sort of "hibernation." I felt ready. I didn't want to talk to my best-friends. I was motivated to spend some intensive time only with God. I felt ready to do what He had for me to do. I felt ready to accept His great commission. I had been torn for so long. I had been holding onto the world for so long. I had been double-minded for so long. It was time.

I saw my high school friend David (now a successful playwright) on Our Voices one Sunday morning in March. He was discussing his latest production, which when in town I wouldn't allow myself to go and see, although I liked and believed in the title of the work. It was only the Lord I could call upon to help me overcome the sense of envy I felt; yes, even jealousy. Not at David so much, but more anger and disappointment with myself. I wasn't mad at David for doing his work; I was mad at me for not doing mine! And probably more to the point, I was resentful for not being recognized and celebrated for the work I had done!

An associate producer I work with offered me his studio for the week, while he returned home to New York, to visit his Romanian wife, sick with cancer. The first evening in that 16th Street top-floor apartment reminded me of better days. I sat down at the table that he had built by hand, and lit candles that he had laid out upon it. Realizing that I wanted and needed once again that type of mental space for myself, I searched the classifieds, looking for a place to live. I had sacrificed my peace of mind for so long. The next day I put in an application for a studio apartment a few blocks from my office.

Two weeks later, I accepted an offer to apartment-sit for another native New Yorker. I felt every bit the vagabond, traveling here and there, with no place of my own. I arrived that first night at his one-bedroom condo with a few new CD's and in need of a respite. I put on some Carmen and settled back onto his vanilla cotton sofa to check my voice-mail. The woman from the apartment complex had left a message. I hung up and cried, praising God! My application for rental had been accepted!

It seemed appropriately odd, that I should be on the verge of such a transformation, coming just as I was upon the age of 30. Jesus himself was 30 when He began his public ministry. What had he done all of His life prior to that? He lived. He grew.

I have lived.
I have grown.

Like a famed female author with a book of the same reference, I am tired of crossing the same river twice. I've lived cross-wise, been a whore, breathed the air of the desperate, performed the deeds of the needy, acted out like the lonely do, spoke like the troubled and at times said nothing like the mute; I gave as the gifted do, sang the songs of the inspired (and the uninspired), took precious time from my own talent, went down like the wayward and turned around like the found; I've carried on like the cursed do and at times behaved liked the blessed; at others, I've been wicked and worse, then momentarily Holy.

I've lived in all those places.

I understand what being displaced in history has done to Black folks -- and to the brothers in particular. Psychologically, the uprooting of Africans some hundreds of years ago remains a lingering devastation. Images of Black men today are by-and-large steeped in pathos. It's enough to drive a brother to the pipe, a joint or a drink.

April approached, bringing with it a heightened awareness of a landmark 30 years amidst the living. I moved into my studio on Good Friday. The following week, I attended a Tuesday Bible meeting of Christian believers in the workplace. During that gathering, I was abrupt, abrasive and harsh, even to the point of telling a brother that he wasn't really "saved" if he didn't agree with the point I was making -- a point that, by the way, escapes me now. Then, however, it was an important point, one on which I sacrificed the friendship of this brother to make.

He sent me a handwritten missive later in the week; a note that I didn't read thoroughly, except the part about me being of "spiritual disservice" to my fellow believers, because of my intolerance of the ideas put forth by others. Basically, he chastised me for hurting his feelings by my overly-aggressive and arrogant comments about his salvation. He was right! Who do I think I am?

In the shower one morning a few days later, I couldn't help but think about entering back into the United States upon my return from an upcoming trip -- and having to go through Customs inspection. I couldn't help but think about how I would probably be separated out from the rest of the contingent; asked to empty my things onto a conveyor belt; thoroughly searched; perhaps even taken to yet another room and examined even further.

I have lived there, too.
Why?
Because I'm a Black man.

My 30th birthday was approaching in a little more than a week's time when I stepped onto a British Airways flight to Nice via London. The company was flying me business class to an international television market in the south of France. Riding for the first time in the upstairs of a 747 gave me pause; perhaps I was beginning to reach some goals, maybe life was, indeed, changing for me -- after all. If success was to be measured by the class of service in which I flew on that April evening, then I felt as if I had arrived, or was arriving, or that I had at least left somewhere, bound for someplace better.

On the plane, and in between sips of Baileys on the rocks, I contemplated ever-so-briefly the criticisms penned by my brother-in-Christ. In my heart, I know I didn't mean any harm, but I decided not to return to the Bible study -- at least not for a long while.

A promotion had been in the works for me for several weeks. It happened a few days before I left for the South of France. Gone were my bosses' phone lines; gone was her meeting calendar, her e-mails, her constant nod to schedule this or fax that. Theoretically, I was my own man now, with my own responsibilities, with the possibility of really being able to give of my intrinsic God-given talent and not just of those abilities acquired through the desperate and ever-present need to survive in the city.

I could see the horizon!
Maybe it was Sun!

My first major magazine piece was due to be published -- and I received the check only days before leaving for France. It was more than I had ever before been paid to write; and Essence magazine's readership was the largest that had ever been exposed to my work.

The trans-continental flight allowed for a lot of reflection. I'm going back to France. It's been two years and a little over two weeks since I've been there last. Not Paris this time (although I tried to see her, too). I return to France a dred-head Prince, still alone as far as a mate, but yet still very much with my God.

Post-Script
When the day I turned 30 finally arrived, I was back home only a day. Despite my worse fears and constant anxiety while in Cannes (and in the weeks leading up to getting there), I was not stopped and detained at U.S. Customs; in fact, I was the first one in the company delegation to pass through. The official even said to me: "Welcome home!"

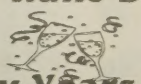
What a relief!

With this thirtieth year, I'm still digesting a brother's portion. I've come of age in the belly of everything colored. Negro, Black and African-American. There are other brothers out there like me -- and who I am like. It's true that I'm unique. Yes, I am an original. "But I'm not the only one." John Lennon was right!

Maybe life for me (although it ain't been no crystal stair); just maybe it is getting better. Maybe change really is on the horizon. Maybe it is Sun -- and not so much of the rain I've known.

Robert Wesley is a freelance writer living in Washington, DC. His essays have appeared in Essence, BLACKfire, The Washington Post, The Washington Times, and The Washington Afro-American newspapers, among others.

"Party 'till the Well Runs Dry"



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Time: 10:00 o' clock p.m.
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One Block from Oakland's famous Gingerbread House Restaurant

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And The Winner is...

...I, Inc., East Bay Lesbian and Gay Democratic ... and the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund invite you to submit nominations for the 1997 First Annual Trailblazer Awards. The Trailblazer Awards were founded as a means to celebrate lesbians and gays in the East Bay who have made significant contributions to the community as well as individuals that support and advocate for gay and lesbian civil rights.

The Trailblazer Honoree Selection Committee is committed to recognizing the diversity, creativity and talent that exists within the community. Your nomination will be the first step in making the 1997 Trailblazer Awards a success. Honorees will be recognized at the Trailblazer Awards banquet on March 1, 1997, at the Clarion Suites Lake Merritt Hotel, Oakland, California. We hope that you will attend!

Please use the following form to submit nominations for the *First Annual Trailblazer Awards*:

Nominee
Name:
Address:
Phone: Daytime: Evening:

Please check the category/categories of achievement for which this person is being nominated:

- ☐ Arts & Culture
- ☐ Athletics
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Community Services
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Health Care
- ☐ Law
- ☐ Literature
- ☐ Media
- ☐ Philanthropy
- ☐ Politics
- ☐ Spirituality
- ☐ Trades
- ☐ Youth/Elder Services

Please describe the specific achievements of this nominee that you wish to be considered by the Trailblazer Honoree Selection Committee:

(You may attach additional sheets as needed.)

Nominator
Your Name:
Address:
Phone: Daytime: Evening:

The deadline for nominations is December 22, 1996. Please mail, deliver, or fax to First Annual Trailblazer Awards, 351 - 15th Street, Oakland, CA 94612 fax (510) 835-4206

Nominees must 1) live in the East Bay; 2) have demonstrated excellence in one or more identified categories of achievement; 3) have advanced the interests of lesbians and gays in the East Bay through her/his work; and 4) be willing to accept press coverage of receipt of this Award.

If you wish to nominate someone, at a minimum you should describe the nominee's area of achievement, achievements in that/those field(s), past awards or honors, how the nominee's work has advanced the interests of East Bay lesbians and gays, and any other reasons why you believe this person is deserving of an award.

The Transgender Dilema:

"Equality and Justice" - Still Unrealized

By Sharyn Greyson

On May 23, 1996, a large portion of the Northern California Transgender community came together at a San Francisco based forum which we purportedly and opportunity for the community to share information with representatives from the Department of Health Services, State Office of AIDS Administration, in Sacramento. Many representatives of the East Bay Transgender community, supporters and Gay Rights activists were in attendance. Numerous long-standing and heartfelt issues and concerns directly affecting the East Bay Transgender population were voiced. Needless said, the gathering was both an emotionally charged and passionate event.

During the culmination of the one-day session, a statement was made by Harold Rasmussen, Chief of the HIV Education and Prevention Services Branch of the State Office of AIDS, in which he expressed sincere thanks and appreciation for the "new" knowledge gained about the plights of the various Transgendered communities of Northern California, as well as a personal pledge to insure inclusion of the TG population in future (relevant) protocols and directives administered by his office.

With my heartfelt respect to Mr. Rasmussen and his staff, I want to believe that he meant what he said to us in that auspicious environment, on that beautiful Northern California day. However, I've heard it all before.

For me personally, it has now been 27 years of auspicious meetings in fine hotel conference rooms with the end result always the same: "the promise" of a better tomorrow -- with equality and justice -- for the Transgender population.

It is an historically proven fact that the TG community was at the forefront of the initial Gay Rights Movement activities, more commonly known as Stonewall. The very first injuries sustained were inflicted upon the "drag queens" who stood firmly in their high-heeled pumps on the front lines of defense, adamant in their defiance that no more would they endure the injustice, indignities, and humiliation of an unsympathetic (and uninformed) public. That was more than 20 years ago. Even today, that pain is still very much a part of the day to day existence of any Transgender man or woman.

However, the pain is probably most intense among those TG identified person who find themselves incarcerated. Of the estimated 1,000 self-identified Transgendered persons in California penal institutions today, additional random estimates support that more than 88% are MTF's (Male-to-Female) -- or males who self-identify/dress as the opposite sex. Although very little information is available on statistics regarding true FTM's (Female-to-Male) under the "Transgender Umbrella," their existence (and numbers) cannot be discounted. Because this segment of our population often finds it easier to merge into the close-knit and secretive confines of the Lesbian community, FTM Transgenders are often erroneously counted and included as a part of the overall Lesbian experience. Therefore, actual statistics relating to incarceration would be almost impossible to determine without a professional survey.

The idea of Lesbianism brings to mind a great misconception on the part of the "Straight" community in relation to Transgenders overall. It seems to be a general assumption that a Lesbian is -- or must be -- a Genetic female. No so. Within the world of Transgenderism, there are surgically reassigned MTF's (Male to Females) who are (and have always self-identified themselves as) Lesbians. They prefer and seek relationships with Genetic Females -- often Heterosexual or Bisexual women -- as their partners. As well, there are those cases of FTM's (Female-to-Male) who also prefer the companionship of self-identified MTF's (Male-to-Female) as their choice for soul-mates and/or sexual partners. This is considered a part of the Lesbian lifestyle within the Transgender community -- and is set apart from the "traditional" Lesbian lifestyle, as is more commonly known and portrayed in mainstream society.

Further, (and to add to your confusion, at this point) although it is usually understood that to be Transgendered, one has already experienced sexual reassignment, this may, or may not, be true. The "new age -- 90's" definition of Transgenderism is simply: "one that adopts the characteristics and dress of the sex that is opposite to their own physical genitalia." All persons who fir this category fall somewhere under the Transgender Umbrella. This includes, but is not limited to Drag Queens; Transvestites and Butch Lesbians.

As individuals are beginning to feel more comfortable about disclosing their sexual preferences, the Umbrella is ever-expanding. So much so, that many of us, ourselves are beginning to experience various levels of confusion about how we are being defined and/or grouped as Transgenders. Nonetheless, the TG community is not confused about the continuing injustices and lack of equality faced on a daily basis.

While we struggle for definitive identity, others among our peer group are struggling (more seriously) for their very lives.

There have been innumerable acts of brutality and violence against Transgendered persons in the East Bay within the past two years. Murders included. As of this date, only one of the four murders of Transgendered individuals that occurred in Alameda County between July 1, 1994 and July 1, 1996, have resulted in an arrest and/or conviction. There have been incalculable numbers of assaults and incidents of domestic violence that have, for the most part, gone unreported. There is a general feeling of disdain and distrust for the Oakland Police Department, especially among the TG community. This has resulted in a lack of reporting of violent acts against TGs. Several community based organizations have (in the past) attempted to facilitate meetings with the OPD and the Oakland TG community, encouraging open dialogue in an effort to create an amicable understanding and process for mutual respect and trust. However, most East Bay TGs still feel they are views and "freaks and psychos" by City Police personnel. Sadly, this distrust and lack of confidence is carried over to the local judicial system. Unfortunately, Transgenders who must handle business within the court system, often feel their outcomes will be nothing less than negative, once their lifestyle is revealed. This fact causes most TG's to either restrict their involvement in the judicial infrastructure to a very minimal level, or to have no involvement at all -- even when they know they have been legally victimized.

The victimization of TGs is a reality even within they guarded confinement of the California penal system. Many TGs have suffered gang rape, assaults, intimidation and threats on a regular basis. Oftentimes these crimes go unreported, due to the victim's fear of retaliation. Can you imagine the trauma associated with being raped -- sometimes on a regular basis -- by several men, who each have more than a 50% probability of being HIV positive? Especially since condoms are not permitted in California prisons. So, in this horrendous circumstance there is no remote possibility of lessening the victim's potential for HIV/AIDS infection. It seems that prison officials feel there is no need for contraceptives since sexual contact among inmates of the opposite sex is not permitted and sexual contact among inmates of the same sex is not officially recognized at all.

During my years of HIV/AIDS activism in the Transgender community, I've spoken with many former inmates, as well as penal system employees at various levels of authority. All of them have states, emphatically, that drug and sexual activity are prominent aspects of any State penal institution. In fact, when it is known than an individual is Transgendered, they are placed in separate or segregated housing as a form of protective custody. Considering the fact that there are a significant number of MTF Transgenders who have undergone hormone therapy, breast augmentation and/or silicone injections prior to their incarceration, the obvious physical changes in their appearance make "protective custody" a very serious matter. Of course, if complete surgical reassignment has taken place, the inmate is confined to an institution compatible with his or her (new) gender.

At present, the California State Penal System is not equipped or prepared to deal with the many problems associated with the confinement of Transgendered individuals.

Truly, the Transgender Community has many obstacles to overcome in individual pursuits for success and happiness. Admittedly, some of the demons to be faces are those of our own creation. However, the profound lack of knowledge and education in Transgender related issues is a travesty that we must all share equally.

There are many members of our TG population who, each day, make enormous and very positive contributions to their various communities and neighbors.

Since we do not all look the same, or share consistent ideologies, we cannot all be considered alike. Remember, the "Transgender Umbrella" is as vast in its branches as those of anyone's family tree. Therefore, to judge the masses to the actions of a few is as great an injustice as to judge all members of any particular family by the actions of one individual member.

Many persons in the United States TG population take great pride in being productive residents and citizens. We are your doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers, religious leaders, bus drivers cooks, phone operators, builders, bankers, TV personalities and local business owners. We are also your mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers.

Never before has it been more important for each of us to begin to open our hears and our minds to a more compassionate, loving and understanding level of respect for one another.

The Transgender community only asks that you afford us the same level of respect that you demand for yourself. Nothing more. Nothing less.

It is my fervent belief that if we embrace the idea of simple respect for each other, equality and justice fore everybody is a very obtainable reality. Why not give it a try?

We cannot change
unless we survive
but we will not survie
unless we change

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For those of you who dare to think that astrology and the Bible don't mix, then I suggest that you think again... The scriptures are loaded with astrological symbolism to foretell the signs of the times. Besides, don't you know that the wise men of old were simply men of God who could read the signs and the stars...The stars that are bright for all to see

♈ **Aries**: Before you grew into a ram, you were but a lamb. Not only are you the first astrological sign of the zodiac but you are also depicted from the scriptures as " The lamb of God".

In the beginning you were depicted as God's pride and joy. Gallivanting through paradise without a care in the world. But remember that being the little lamb makes you the sacrifice as well and sacrifice you must if you are to see this new year yield any new crops for you. Although Sacrifice indeed may be a tough word to swallow, swallow it you must. If you don't, It's off to the slaughter house you will go.

It is left up to you to decide what you will sacrifice for the coming year but if you look into the story of "Solomon" and find what he asked God for, you may yet receive that spiritual gift and do quite well with it in 1997

♉ **Taurus:** Your sign this month reminds me of the biblical age when Moses came down from the mountain after having seen God and finds the people singing, praising, dancing, drinking wine and liquor and eating food as they worshipped a pure golden calf. He was so angry at the people for having given some physical image of God and a beastly one at that, that he dropped the 10 commandments that he held in his hand.

Sweet Taurus the Bull, Take this as a sign not to worship money, love, or any other kind of idol. Lest you may be left with a hallow image of yourself and others as a result. As a spiritual gift that will help you blaze through 1997, I suggest that you remember the story of "Abraham and Sarah." Find out what they needed to have for the coming days. For it is there that you will see the light at the end of the tunnel. Man can not live by bread alone.

♊ **Gemini:** It is within this month that the Gemini twins take a resemblance to the biblical story of Adam and Eve when they were in the garden and embarked upon the Tree of Knowledge. This tree had the ability to bear fruits that were both good and evil. At the time when the devil tempted Eve with the fruit, he, Adam, and Eve had yet to realize that all things work for the greater good, even the seemingly evil work of the devil himself. Although our flesh may be weak, It takes us only to look into the spirit. This will allow us to strive to become new.

Dear Twins you will have many bouts with your higher and lower self in 1997 but if you read from beginning to end the story of "Job" you will see that it is here that you will find your spiritual gift, one that will allow you to make the right decisions in the coming year.

♋ **Cancer:**: Your sign would do well to remember the story of "King David" in its entirety. When David was a youth he was able to slay Goliath in the name of a cause that was indeed greater that he. The people were truly amazed at his chivalry for Goliath had been a great champion. But it is also well to remember that when David became King he got a little beside himself and started seeking things that were not rightly his; namely a woman by name of "Bethsheba". He was barely spared by the skin of his teeth by a great prophet who was also a true friend. David was then able to humble himself...

Most noble Cancer, A spiritual gift that will be of great comfort to you in 1997 lies in learning to continue to give good service and taking the solid advice of other. For who knows, at one time or another you might be entertaining an angel. Reading the entire story of "David" wouldn't be such a bad idea either.

♌ **Leo:** Your sign these days is likened to the biblical history of "King Hezekiah, "The Reformer." At one time in King Hezekiah's life, a prophet by name of Isaiah came to visit him. Isaiah told him that he must set his affairs in order as he was going to die because he leaned on the understanding of others as opposed to that of his spiritual foundation.. King Hezekiah was so distraught that he fell to his knees and asked his higher power to remember how he sought greater understanding in his youth and that he would make a diligent effort to do more of that from that day on. Needless to say, Isaiah the prophet returned and told King Hezekiah that his petition was heard and that if he abided by it, things would go even better in his life.

Well Lion or lioness, let that be a message to you that not only should you work on your own personal projects but you would also do well to adhere to doing more reading and studying on your personal growth, especially since you will need it 1997. Your spiritual gift will be found by studying the life of Samuel - the great prophet, for it is within these stories that you will find the guidance and direction needed to steer a clear path through 1997.

♍ **Virgo:** Ironically, Virgo is the symbol of the virgin. Interesting enough the ideology behind being a virgin is not always what it may seem to be. Being a virgin actually begins with being pure at heart and honest with your motives. As December unfolds it will be wise for you to remember the difficulty Mary had when she was trying to convince her husband Joseph of her holy conception of the child that would be named Jesus. She went through a great deal of persecution because of what she believed in and stood for. Nonetheless she persevered with a honest heart and was greatly rewarded for her suffering.

Well Virgo, as controversial as this story is, it is by far one of the greatest stories ever told. If you were to proceed into 1997 overcoming here say, and controversy then you will do well. It would benefit you to read "Jeremiah" Chapter 1 for it is there that you will find the spiritual guidance and direction to courageously move into 1997

♎ **Libra:** Old great soul of balancing scales and judgment take heed to what I am about to say. As the wintery month of December breezes along I am reminded of the story of Paul whose name was changed from Saul. He was a person who condemned and killed anyone who did not follow the laws to the letter. Later as his spirit began to change he became more liberal. He also wrote that if you live by every word of the moral law, you surely will die by that same law. And it is there that he began to search for the spirit of matters as opposed to being so judgmental. He also mentioned that it is not what goes into the body that creates problem, but what comes out of the body which is what we must come to terms with.

Libra if you are to find fairness and equality while entering 1997 then it is suggested that you study "The Letters to Paul" especially "Romans" for in that realm you shall find mercy and understanding in the coming year.

♏ **Scorpio:** Tiny scorpion of the ground, before you can transform into your true symbol, which is that of the eagle, you must learn some lessons this month in leadership. Remember when "Moses" went to the mountain to talk to God? God had given him some instructions for the people. Well, you would do well to remember that in the beginning Moses did not feel fit to do the job that God had given him. God had Moses' brother Aaron, who was a good speaker, go with him to speak and guide the people. Aaron became Moses' spokesperson to the people.

Scorpion before you can lead in 1997 it is suggested that you learn how to follow. And what better place to learn this than from reading II Kings Chapter 1 through 7. There are several examples of leading and following within those pages. Now go and lead the people! For "Elijah" was indeed a great teacher and leader.

♐ **Sagittarius:** Most honorable Sag. I call you to the remembrance this month of the scholastic lessons of "Habakkuk" from the Old Testament.. He once questioned God on why evil was allowed to reign at times and appear as though no justice would prevail. Through much trial and tribulation he learned that with trust and patience in the good of all things, justice inevitably prevails. Maybe not as soon as one may like it but patience is a faithful but most difficult lesson..

Courageous Sag., you may indeed believe you are a great and wise person but if you don't heed to your own advice, I shudder to think what troubles may lie ahead for you in 1997. The greatest teachers not only learn by example, they set examples for themselves and others to live by. Your great philosophical gift for the coming year can be found and comprehended in the story of "Jonah" . If you really want to hear and follow God, Allah, Buddha, Jehovah, or whatever name you want to call it, then I suggest you keep still and listen to the counsel of your own heart.

♑ **Capricorn:** If it is historically true that "Jesus Christ" was born on Dec. 25th then that would make him a Capricorn. Ironically enough Capricorn being the sign of the goat and it has also symbolically been considered the sign of Devil. All things considered: Did you know that on many occasion "The Christ" was called a devil, a blasphemer, sacrilegious, among many other not so nice names. But as "Christ" so eloquently put it "A man can not have two masters for he will love one and hate the other". He was also quoted for having said "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you".

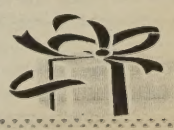
Wise Capricorn if all of this sounds confusing and like gibberish, I suggest you keep quiet if you cannot find a kind words to say to your friends, co-workers, loved ones, and enemies... Reading and applying the "Gospel of Matthew" will provide you with a excellent plan to follow into "97". May love be bountiful for you in the coming year.

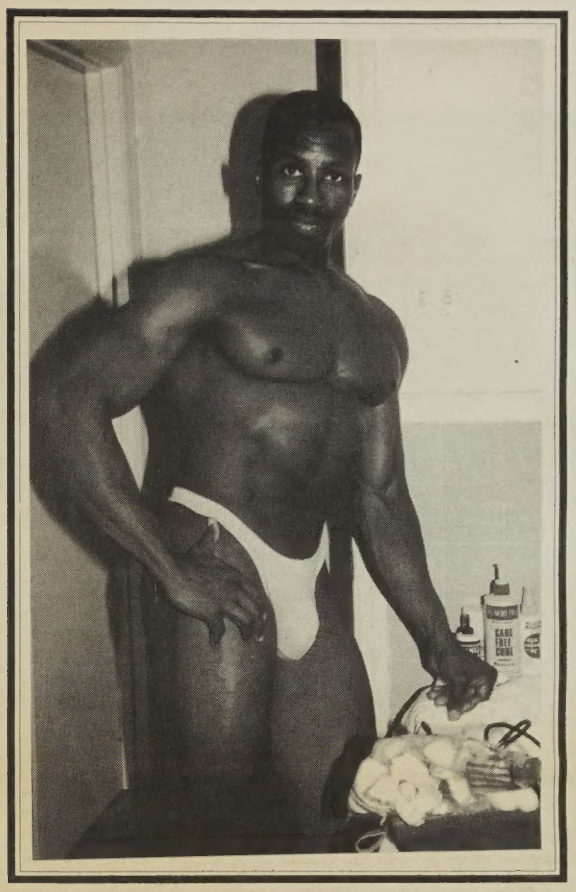
♒ **Aquarius:** As you may have been told on countless occasions we are entering into the age of "Aquarius" which represents a period of new thought and new mental development. And what greater visionary was there then Joshua who was Moses' assistant. At Moses' death Joshua inherited the people, and by the grace of God was able to fulfill the promise of the new opportunities of the future. But this was not automatically done without much hard work and effort on the part of the people.

Likewise my great Aquarian inventor, there are no free meal tickets, free rides, or free anything else for you in the coming new year. If you are anticipating any kind of harvest at all for 1997, then I strongly suggest that you make continuing education your friend and discover the inner meaning of "Ecclesiastics" for that part of the "Old Testament" imparts great wisdom for the past, present, and the future.

♓ **Pisces:** On many occasion "Christ" was said to have done many miracles with fish. There were even times when he called "The Apostles" fishers of men. "The Acts of the Apostles" was a story of a strange group of men indeed. And for the most part they were indeed a great catch by "Christ". Not only were they compassionate people, they also become great visionaries, speakers and dreamers among many other great things.

Well true Pisces dreamer and visionary, I see many astonishing opportunities in the near future for the coming year. Hold fast to your dreams because they may all come true. For some hints on how to utilize your skills as a great dreamer and visionary read about "Daniel" the great prophet and dream interpreter. Until we talk again "Pleasant Dreams".





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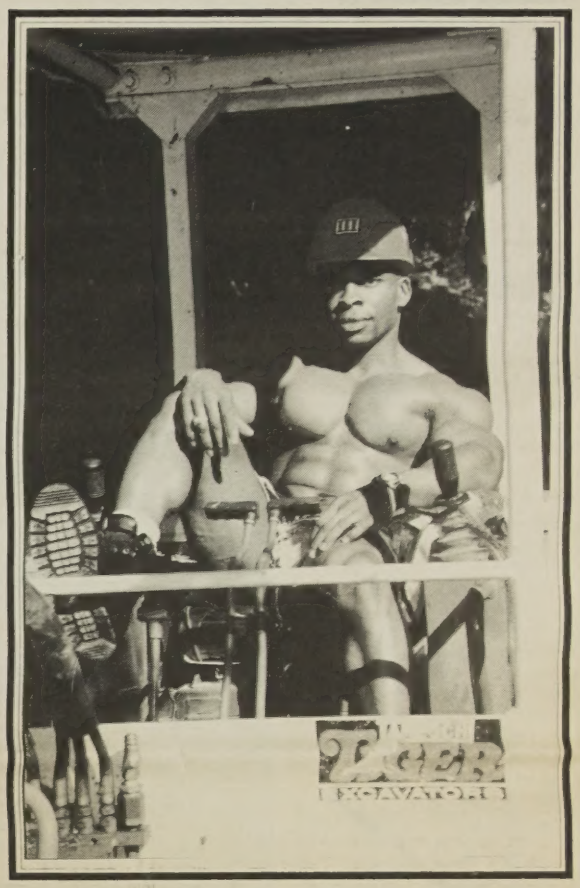

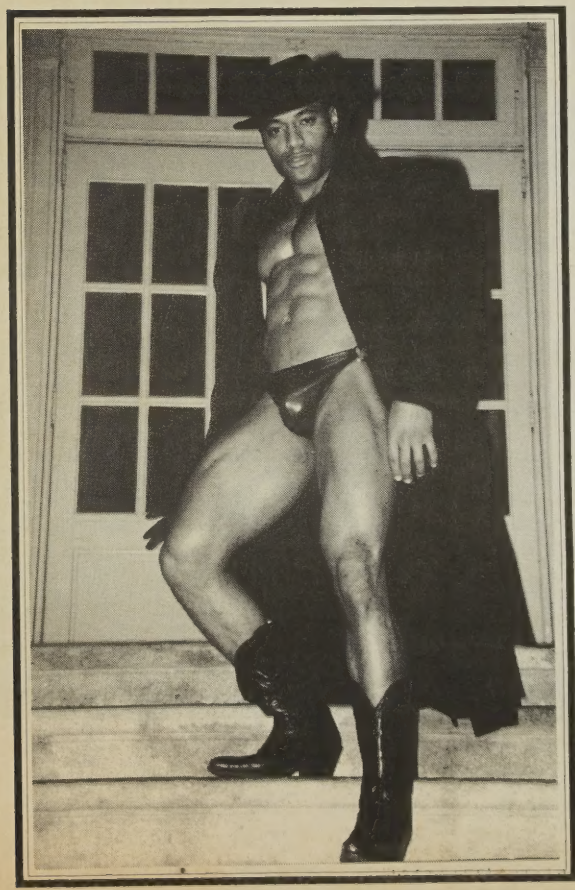

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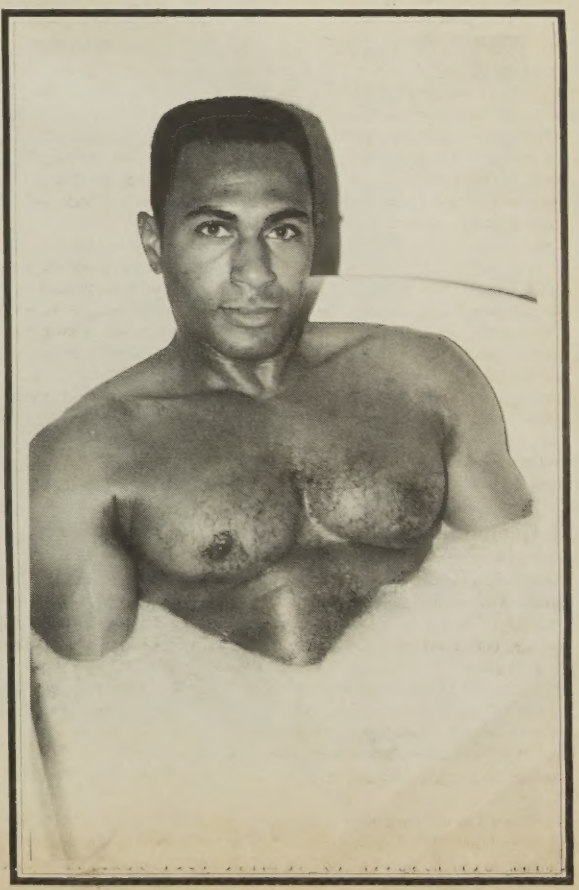

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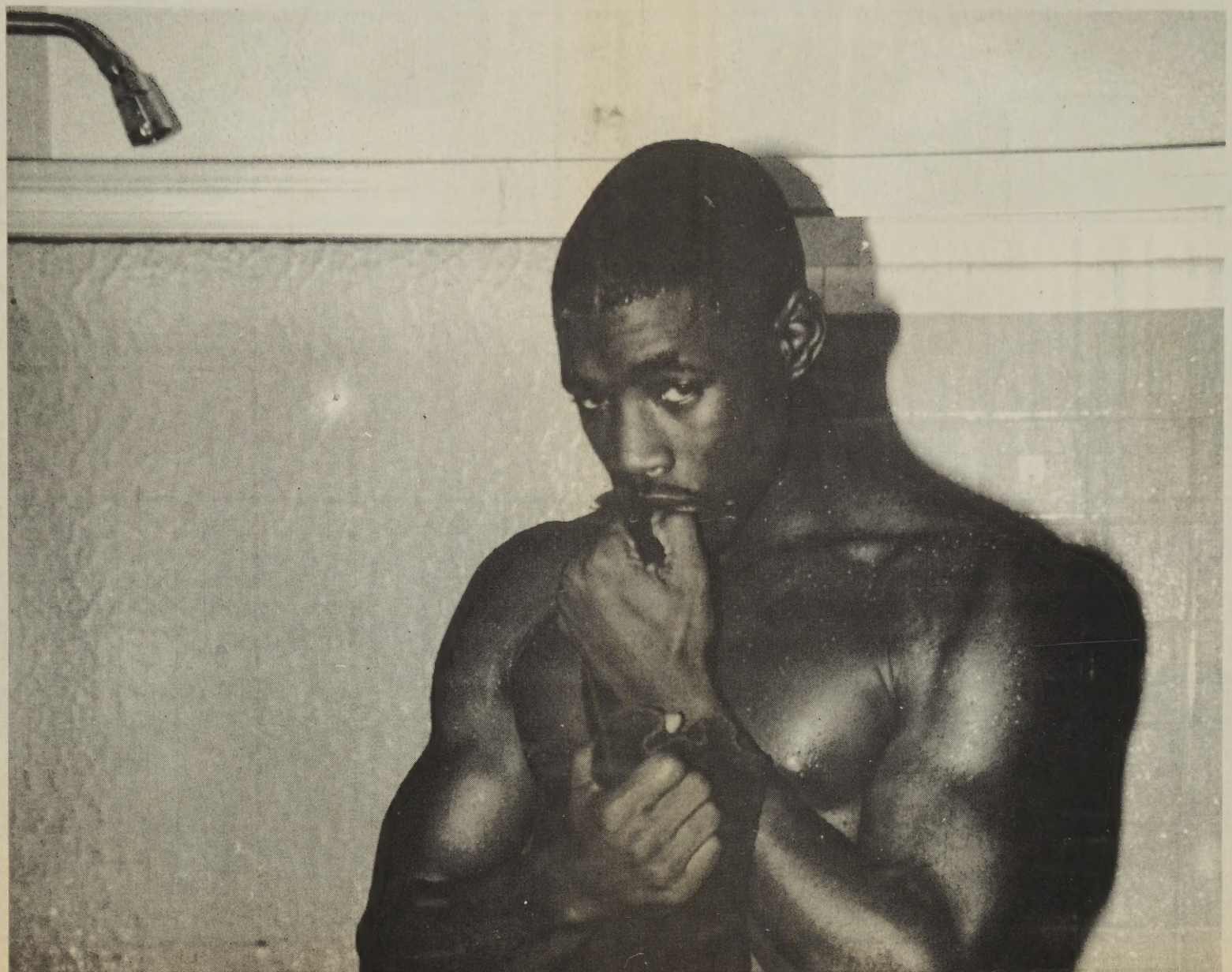

All I Want For Christmas...

Entertainment News

From the Electronic Urban Report (EUR)
http://www.EURweb.com

CHAKA KHAN

Is back with the single "Never Miss the Water," a new track featured on her greatest hits package. The CD features about a dozen of the classic tunes that made Chaka an icon in R&B music. But while Chaka's had a successful career, her personal life was in shambles. There was drug abuse, a failed marriage and a strained relationship with her parents -- all of which she'll probably address in her upcoming autobiography.

"I've had a lot of lows," says Chaka. "It's like (life) fluctuates back and forth, but it's almost always sixty-forty one way or the other. So, you know, I don't dwell on the high points or the low points. They happen, I acknowledge them and I move to the next point."

Chaka hopes to have the book out by next fall. Her greatest hits CD "Epiphany: The Best of Chaka Khan" hit stores last week.

ON THE BOOKSHELF

"The perception that most entertainers want the public to get ain't what it really is," or so says Kevin Ammons, **Whitney Houston's** ex-bodyguard. In the unauthorized biography, "Good Girl, Bad Girl" (Birch Lane Press) Ammons has decided to tell all. Ammons entered Whitney's inner circle after he began having an affair with Whitney's former publicist Regina Brown in the early 90s. During his four years as part of Whitney's entourage Ammons claims there were drug problems among Whitney and her brothers, knock down drag out fights between Whitney and her long time friend Robyn Crawford, and a strained relationship between Whitney and her parents. Ammons addresses some of the main rumors about Whitney -- the allegations that she is bi-sexual and the reason why she married **Bobby Brown**. "I do know that Whitney and Robyn were lovers," Ammons told us. "I know that at one time they had a love relationship. I don't know what Whitney's reasons are for wanting to hide it. But she didn't want to come out and be exposed.

Whitney Houston

As for Bobby, Ammons says Whitney loves him. And the reason they've had so many difficulties in their marriage is because Whitney is such a big star and well...Bobby isn't. "When he got with Whitney, he got with somebody he's trying to keep up with," Ammons said.

Now if you like your drama to be strictly fiction, Eric Jerome Dickey has written "Sister, Sister." His novel, published by Dutton Books, is about black women in Southern California, struggling with life and love.

J. California Cooper's works continue to astound, amaze and move those who read them. And her most recent collection of short stories, "Some Love, Some Pain, Sometime" (Anchor Books) tells the tales of black women who're dealing with all the joy and sorrow life brings.

Another critically acclaimed author, John Edgar Wideman, has a new novel "The Cattle Killing" (Houghton Mifflin). Wideman's new work is based around an 1853 outbreak of plague in Philadelphia where blacks were blamed for causing the disease.

On the subject of opportunity in America is a book by William Julius Wilson called "When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor." "When Work", blames the erosion of blue collar jobs and the flight of employment opportunities away from urban communities for many social ills.

A LIFE, A SYMBOL

For those with a historical mind set, a new bio, "Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol" from Norton Books, takes a fresh look at one of American history's legendary figures. Sojourner was a former slave, and although she never learned to read or write, she became one of the leading symbols of the abolitionist movement. Written by Princeton history professor Nell Irvin Painter, it makes Sojourner Truth much more of a real live human, than the larger-than-life figure she's become.

"We shouldn't take symbols in history on face value," says the author. "So many women kind of suspected that Sojourner Truth was too big, too strong and too fabulous to be true and they're really interested in knowing the history and they're delighted to know about other black women."

"Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol" is available in bookstores.

NEWSBITS

New Edition is scheduled to open the 1996 Billboard Music Awards in Las Vegas. Toni Braxton along with Celine Dion, Brooks & Dunn and ZZ Top will perform at the December 4 event. Chris Rock is hosting the show.

Capitol Records, a division of EMI Music, has formed the EMI/Nat King Cole Scholarship Program to help qualified African-Americans get college scholarships. There are too many details to print here, so for more information call 213-871-5354.

The **NAACP's** Legal Defense Fund has awarded Sara Lee and Procter & Gamble with its first Corporate Affirmative Action Award. The award will go to companies that have taken it upon themselves to "do the right thing." Sara Lee was honored for its aggressive affirmative action programs, Proctor & Gamble because its CEO John Pepper has shown a personal commitment to diversity.

Whatever happened to...**Alexander O'Neal**. Well he's back with a new album on the London based EMI Premier label. He's going to tour the United Kingdom in hopes of restarting his career. It's been three years since O'Neal has had an album out.The singer's once promising career was derailed in part because of his past substance abuse problems.

Oprah Winfrey's best friend **Gayle King** has gotten her tv-talker cleared in 60 percent of the U.S. The show, syndicated by Eyemark Entertainment, will begin airing in the fall of 1997. "The Gayle King Show" will mix talk with a magazine-style exploration of the daily issues of life.

New Line Cinema (The people who brought us "Set it Off") is in discussions to make the film "American History X." Described as "controversial," the film is about urban racism and it's consequences as a family ripped apart when one member struggles with hate/bigotry/violence.

Okay, so maybe **Michael Jackson** didn't actually "do it" with his new wife Debbie Rowe. (Not that we ever believed that he actually did "do it.") According to her father, Gordon Rowe, she was artificially inseminated. He also says he was shocked when his daughter called him and said she was having the superstar's baby. In a surprise move, **Michael Jackson** tied the knot on 11/14/96 to the woman carrying his child. The King of Weird married Debbie Rowe in an early morning ceremony in Sydney, Australia, according to a Jackson spokesperson. In a statement released to the press, Jackson said, "Please respect our privacy and let us enjoy this wonderful and exciting time."

Paul Abdul has placed her Los Angeles home up for sale. It can be yours for $2.7 million. The 6,800 square foot home, located in a guarded community has five bedrooms, a pool, gym, a lagoon, and koi pond.

Can super-producer **Babyface** do for film and television what he's done in music? Well Fox certainly hopes so. Face and his wife, Tracey Edmonds, have inked a three-year, first-look film producing deal with Fox 2000 for their new Edmonds Entertainment company. They've also signed a three-year first-look producing deal with 20th Century Fox TV. ($$KER-CHING$$)

"Soul Food" is their first movie project, which is now underway in Chicago with **George Tillmand Jr.** ("Scenes from the Soul") directing. The film stars **Vanessa Williams**, **Vivica Fox** and **Nia Long** in a dramedy centering around a middle-class family in Chicago that falls apart when its matriarch is hospitalized. Another Edmonds Entertainment project (this one, however, is outside the Fox deal) is "The Big Time" with Cinergi. It's a romantic action film. starring **Lauryn Hill** of "The Fugees." Filming begins in the spring.

SET IT OFF

Jada Pinkett, Queen Latifah, Vivica Fox and newcomer Kimberly Elise are Stony, Cleo, Frankie and Tisean respectively in New Line Cinema's "Set It Off." In the action-packed film directed by F.Gary Gray, the ladies are four young women, best friends who've struggled all their lives looking for better than what they've got. But the system fails them, and one by one, the ladies get fed up and decide it's time to get theirs. They figure the solution to all their woes is money -- so they decide to seize their fortune -- literally -- by robbing banks. While on the surface the film might sound like 'Girlz in the 'Hood Meets Dead Presidents,' director F. Gary Gray says it's not.

"I think we've moved in a great direction. You normally see women who are girlfriends, wives, ho's, hookers...We've empowered these women and have basically created such an interesting film that we see them do what the average woman -- the average person -- wants to do."

Jada's character Stony lives her life through her younger brother. She would love to see him go to college, but when she finds out he doesn't get a scholarship, she sells herself to get the money. "I know so many women who make compromises like that everyday. And it's an ugly thing. I wanted especially these young men out here, and all these rap lyrics talkin' 'bout women ain't this, and they ain't worth nuthin', and blah, blah, blah --if you (men) only knew the sacrifices that we make to help YOU maintain. I'm not your enemy. It's not me brother, okay?"

Queen Latifah plays the embattled Cleo -- a butch lesbian,who's on her own and is always in trouble with the law. Latifah says she knows people already think she's gay -- but she not (I'm going to leave this one alone*). And she says, "the fact that (Cleo's) gay, I wasn't really concerned with it. It seemed natural for Cleo, 'cause that's who she was.

Actually it was better because I really wanted to do something different -- something totally opposite of me."

Newcomer Kimberly Elise is Tisean, a naive single mother who faces losing her son after an accident leaves him injured. Frankie, Vivica Fox's character, is trying to find her way out the 'hood by working as a teller at a downtown bank. "Set It Off" also stars Ella Joyce, Anna Marie Horsford, Dr. Dre, and Blair Underwood as Keith, a Harvard educated banker who's Jada Pinkett's love interest.

In Review

We loved "Set It Off." It's a film that on the surface may appear to be another "'hood" drama, but it's so much more. The plot takes on twists and turns that you would never imagine. The story is not typical, and that's what hooked us. We tip our hat to F. Gary Gray for a wonderful directing job. If anybody thought Queen Latifah was just another rapper with lightweight acting skills, then her performance in this film will make them think again. Like any good actor she's not afraid to take chances and the results are fabulous.

Jada Pinkett, Vivica Fox, Blair Underwood are great too. Kimberly Elise, makes a promising debut. Actor John C. McGinley as Detective Strode delivers a strong performance and credit goes to screenwriters Takashi Bufford and Kate Lanier for not making him the stereotype of the "evil white cop." We know some of you will see this film and hate it because you'll be disturbed by the way "black women" are portrayed.If this is your objection, then you've missed the point.

STREETWATCH

Now that a lot of you have checked out "Set it Off," can we discuss Kimberly Elise? She could not have been the absolute best woman for the role of the shy, yet resourceful Ti-Ti. We understand that this is her first film and her character is supposed to be naive and cautious, but we don't think the audience was supposed to giggle at her as much as they did. We watched a screening of "Set it Off" in a theater full of radio station contest winners who had no qualms about yelling out to the screen. Poor Elise got no love as people rudely questioned her acting skills throughout the entire movie. After watching Elise on *BET Talk* , we realized she really has a bashful disposition. Maybe this is why Gray casted her. But an actor cannot always translate to screen his or her actual personality. Ice Cube is an exception. Because Gray has worked so closely with him on "Friday," and in various music videos, maybe he thought her rawness would also work. In our humble opinion, her presence next to Latifah, Jada and yes, even Vivica, reminded us of the old Sesame Street song, "One of these things is doin' it's own thing..."

Speaking of "Set It Off" the film grossed an impressive $11.8 million its first five days in release. It came in third in the weekend box office behind "Ransom" (which hauled in $35 million) and "Romeo and Juliet." Unfortunately there were two shooting incidents at "Set It Off" screenings in Southern California. One person was killed and two were wounded in a gang related shooting outside a Torrance theater showing the film. And a man and woman were shot at Lakewood showing of the film.

(*Whazzup! Editorial note)

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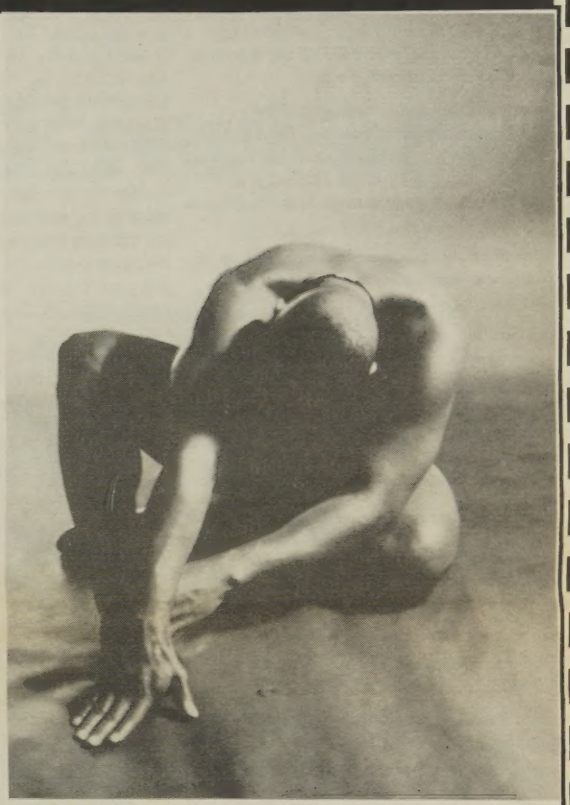

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COLONEL ABRAMS

An Interview - Stephen Johnson

I couldn't believe my ears. Last week I got a call from Justice, a local D.J. in the Bay Area. Here's how the message went:

Justice: Just leave a message Colonel.
Colonel Abrams: Stephen Johnson, this is Colonel Abrams calling. I'm on the line with Gerald (Justice). Give me a call back at ***-**** I can be reached in reference to Colonel Records. Thank You.

Needless to say this message led to the interview that you are about to read.

SJ: First of all, I have to say that I was really excited to find out that I would be doing an interview with you. I have been a fan of yours for years.

CA: The pleasure is mine. Its a pleasure to talk with brothers that are doing something positive like the publication that you guys are doing.

SJ: I first heard about you in '85. During that time I lived in D.C. Your hit song at the time,which went gold, was *Trapped* . You also did quite a bit of performing on the East Coast.

CA: Yeah, I did quite a bit of shows, especially in the DC area. One of the hottest clubs I remember was the Clubhouse.

SJ: Do you remember the dancers that would dance on the Clubhouse speakers?

CA: Yeah, I remember that!

SJ: I was one of the dancers.

CA: Wow, you're one of the legends yourself *(We Laugh).* 'Cause all those boys who danced on the speakers were legends. Get out of here! Every time I used to perform there, my brother (who's my road manager) and I used to say that we thought it was amazing that the speaker dancers were the first thing you noticed as you entered the dance area. There was no other club at that time (that I remember) that had people dancing on the speakers.

SJ: Well, everybody's doing it now.

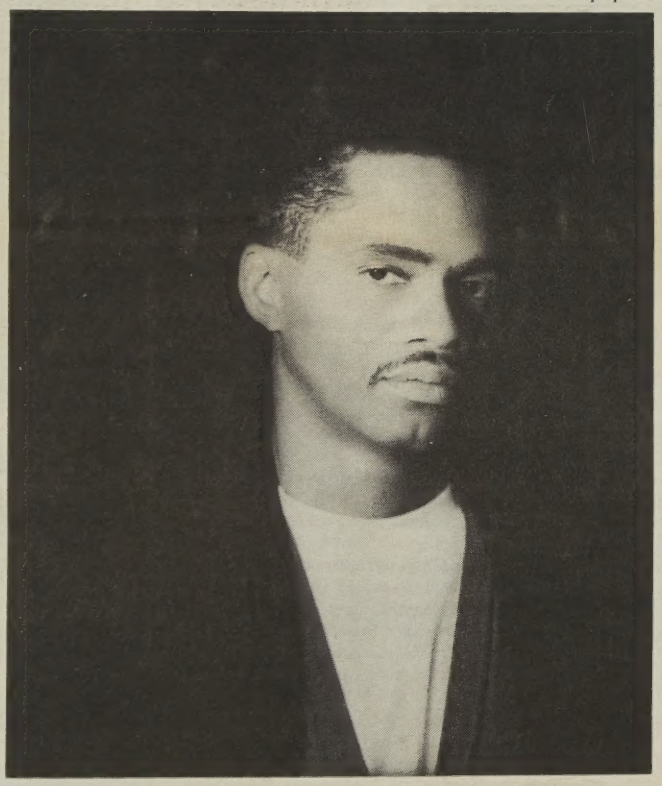
CA: Well you guys started it. If you were dancing on the speakers, you must have known André

SJ: Yeah I knew André, David, Adrian and Rainey - just to name a few. I believe Rainey Cheeks is now pastor of the Unity Fellowship church in D.C.

CA: The other club I remember is Tracks. At the time, when you came into D.C.(me and the other popular artist) you would perform at Tracks as well. Those were the clubs. The energy was really good. I could always perform well at the Clubhouse.

SJ: What are some of your biggest hits?

CA: My first single was in 1983 on the Streetwise label. It was called *Leave The Message Behind The Door*. Ironically it was a ballad. *Leave The Message Behind the Door* was actually the first 12" single on an independent label that charted in Billboard Magazine. Right after that, I recorded *Music Is The Answer*. Around that time, I became very successful. Because *Music Is The Answer* became like an anthem, especially in many of the underground big gay clubs like the Paradise Garage. I really started getting the recognition in 1983. I might also mention that prior to *Leave The Message Behind The Door*. I had did some House tracks. We started House music. I've always said that in my interviews. Kenny, Boy Jarvis, My Brother and myself started House Music in 1983. I had



two tracks that were pumped in The D.C. Clubs one of them was *Release the Tension* and the other was *You Got Me Running*. I'm sure you heard them.

SJ: You did *Release the Tension*?

CA: I was the lead vocalist.

SJ: I'll never forget that song, it was one of my favorites.

CA: I want to let the readers know that with that particular track I did the original. We did it in my house on an 8 track. It never came out on vinyl. After I did it *Fourth and Broadway* had a group called "Circuit" who turned around and did their version of it. Most of the public said that it wasn't the same. They were used to the original. I am sure that what you heard was the original. It was very raw. It was nothing but bass, drums and my voice. That was when house music started. Later on, Chicago came into the picture.

SJ: So for the record we can say that House Music began where?

CA: New York, with songs like *Release the Tension* and *Runnin'*.

SJ: I love the East Coast. Most of my early exposure to House Music was there. We would do the East Coast circuit which was basically DC, Baltimore, Philly and New York. Most of the popular artist entertained on that circuit as well. The top performers actually came to the clubs we partied in. I also remember that we found out who would be performing and where by word of mouth.

CA: Every time I did a show at the Paradise Garage, Larry Levan would come back to the dressing room and say, "You know something, you got everybody here from D.C., Philly and Baltimore.

SJ: That's right we were all there.

CA: It was an unforgettable moment. I am so honored and proud to know that I was a part of that entire era. There aren't many artist around today that can say that can say they performed at the Garage.

SJ: Well I think the most important thing is the performers that did entertain in the East Coast clubs had to be fierce. Because the crowds...

CA: They were vicious. (We laugh). From a performers point of view. You had to be able to work the different types of crowd such as the Friday night crowds versus the Saturday night crowds. When Mike Stone (the owner of the Garage) booked people he used to say, "There is no way I can book you if you can't work both nights". This is because you may be appealing to the Friday crowd which was straight but Saturday, when the children came out, if you didn't know how to work with them, he couldn't use you. It was that kind of a thing. You had to really be a strong act. You had to have that strong underground audience and track record. I was fortunate too because I introduced Thelma Houston when she came out with that single "You Used To Hold Me." She was signed with MCA around the same time that I was signed to MCA. They asked me if I would have the honor of introducing her act at the Garage. That meant a lot to me.

Another thing that was remarkable about the Garage is that there was no emcee. You were on your own. They introduced you from the booth. When you came out, you had to let the people know that were coming to perform as soon as you got out there. It's was sort of like the Apollo Theater. Bip, Boom, Bam, your on. I also performed at the Apollo before I got into the music industry. To me, the crowd at the Apollo were not as intense as the crowd at the Paradise Garage.

SJ: Let's get back to some of your hit records

CA: *I'm Not Gonna Let (you get the best of me)* was one of them. Actually my biggest hit in the States was *How Soon We forget*. That's the one I did the video to.

SJ: For some of the public it may seem as if Colonel Abrams was really hot. You are one of the House music veterans that gave it to us in the mid eighties but disappeared. I'm sure you didn't disappear, so what have you been up to?

CA: After I left MCA in the late 80s I got a record deal with Scotti Brothers Records out in LA. I did one album with them. It got some exposure. There was a track on it called *You Don't Know*. I also performed a few times on Soul Train. After I left Scotti Brothers I did many dance tracks for various people. All of the sudden I became like Lolleetta Holloway and Jocelyn Brown, I was the item to bootleg and sample.

SJ: Sometimes I think that much of the younger audiences don't remember many of your signature songs or phrases, so when they hear it bootlegged they don't even recognize you. Rochelle Fleming is an example.

(Colonol Abrams Interview Continued on pg24)

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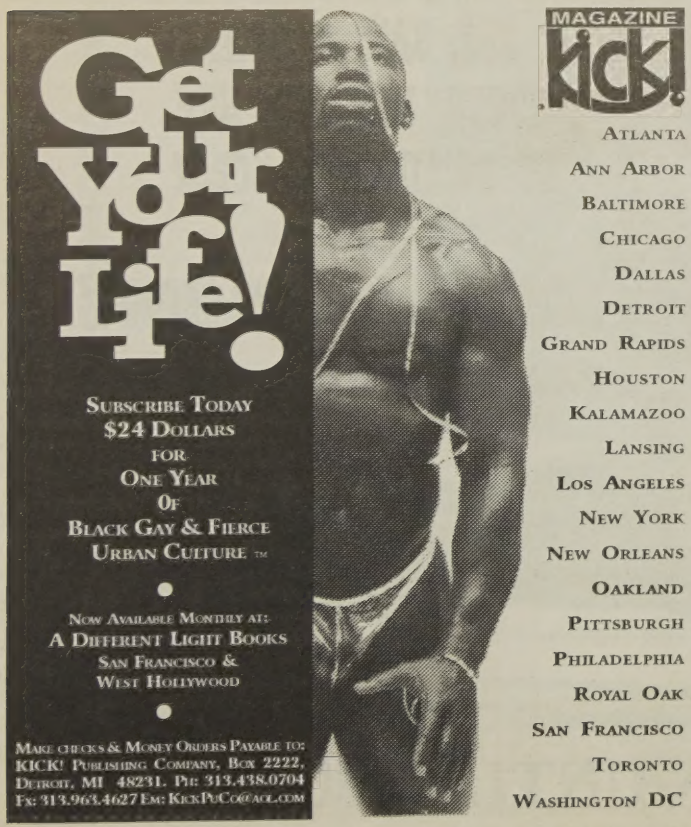

Poetry Corner

Singular
by Audrey Player

i'm trying to stop the actions
of going in circles
round and about
repeating patterns
rooted in the past
learned as a small child
still felt as an old woman

it seems naive to ask
how do I stop this plight
making the same mistakes
over and over again
feeling a pain that is like
deja-vu to my heart
painful, hurtful, familiar.

for when I go back
in my mind's eye
I remember
how distance defined my
existence
distance from my mother,
separate from my father
all the while alone until my
thoughts
were that life was for
singulars

still as a woman
I searched in the eyes
of my lover for my mother
eyes that I knew
and thought that I could love
only again to feel my stomach
my whole marrow aching
anything to feel
that familiar pattern
of dysfunctional, singular love

until this moment
this pattern of love
was my reality
I accepted it
and thought it defined true love
but I know better now
true love would be shamed
to even be compared

WITH KINDLING IN HAND
(A Tribute to James Baldwin)
by Kevin A. Nash

I see that face
those eyes
I feel that spirit
unrelenting soul
flying still
through the body

I feel the heat
gettting ready
with kindling in hand
for the fire

You say you've been burned before
burned by the heat
of a hot iron
Well just get ready for that Great Day
You thought last summer was hot
at 101°
Well just get ready for that Great Day

I see that face
those lips
inhaling, exhaling
speaking of truths
about the man

I feel the heat
getting ready
with kindling in hand
for the fire

You say you've been burned before
burned by the hot grease of yo' mammy's
skillet
Well just get ready for that Great Day
You thought last summer was hot
at 102°
Well just get ready for that Great Day

I see that face
those eyes
I feel that spirit
unrelenting soul
flying still
to speak of oceans
here at home

I feel the heat
oh yes
I feel the heat
getting ready with kindling in hand
for the fire
"The Fire Next Time"

Drug Resistance & Protease Inhibitors

John Montgomery
Kory McGuire

Protease inhibitors differ from drugs like AZT, ddI and 3TC, in that they attack the HIV virus at a different stage in the virus' replication-cycle. Protease inhibitors interfere with the production of an enzyme called protease. Protease is used to cut large proteins into smaller parts. These small parts are needed by the virus to make copies of itself. New viruses can still be formed without protease, but they cannot function well enough to cause infection.

When protease inhibitors were first tested against the HIV virus, researchers thought that it would be difficult for the virus to develop resistance against these drugs. This thought was due in large part to the fact that the protease enzyme is relatively small (consisting of only 99 amino acids-the building blocks of proteins). Researchers assumed that if the protease enzyme changed its structure in response to a drug, the resulting virus would be non-functional.

The problem of drug resistance to protease inhibitors, as well as other antiretroviral drugs, has unfortunately become a very real and complex problem. Drug resistance occurs when the drug is no longer be effective for a particular patient. Researchers have found that 10 mutations (changes in the amino acids) can occur in the protease enzyme without affecting its ability to produce a functional virus. Many studies have been undertaken to evaluate HIV's resistance to protease inhibitors and it has been concluded that the HIV virus is capable of developing resistance to any of the protease inhibitors. It was further found that, resistance to each of the protease inhibitors develops through different mutations.

Even though resistance to each of the protease inhibitors arises from different mutations, it has been found that when a person becomes resistant to one protease inhibitor, they are often resistant to some of the other protease inhibitors. This phenomenon is known as cross-resistance.

Cross-resistance is a problem because it may limit the drugs that will work for you in the future. Presently, three protease inhibitors are currently on the market for treatment of HIV: Crixivan, Saquinavir, and Ritonavir. A clear pattern of cross resistance exists between Crixivan and Ritonavir. This means that by taking one, it's likely your HIV will become resistant to the other. It is less clear whether or not choosing Saquinavir first will result in resistance to either Crixivan or Ritonavir. Until more information is available, people with HIV are faced with the difficult decision of which protease inhibitor to use first and which one to choose when the time does come to switch.

Reversing the resistance to protease inhibitors may be possible in the future. For example, more research may show that by using one protease inhibitor or a combination of drugs, it is possible to reverse the resistance to previously used protease inhibitors. Studies have shown that by using an experimental protease inhibitor under development by Glaxo Wellcome, researchers may be able to reverse resistance to Saquinavir. The findings came from experiments in the test tube , and still need to be tested in humans.

While there are still many unanswered questions about resistance, some things are clear. When using a protease inhibitor, it is extremely important to take the right number of pills, without missing any scheduled doses. Taking a "holiday" from any of your anti-HIV drugs, but especially protease inhibitors is not recommended because it may allow the virus time to replicate even faster, increasing the likelihood of resistance. Also, using a protease inhibitor by itself may be more likely to cause resistance. Some clinicians suggest using "combination-therapy" which usually consists of one protease inhibitor and one or two nucleoside analogs such as AZT, 3TC, d4T, ddI or ddC. It's possible that a combination of drugs could slow down the chances of developing resistance .

Protease inhibitors, have proven to be one of the most significant advancements in the battle against HIV. As with all of your treatment decisions, it is extremely important to discuss the risks and benefits of taking any drug with your primary care provider.

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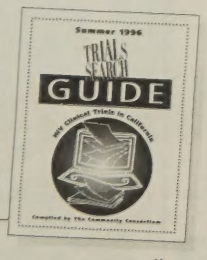

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AIDS Treatment News

Compliments of John S. James

Birmingham UK Drug Therapy Conference -- Early Report

by John S. James

The important 3rd International Congress on Drug Therapy in HIV Infection took place in Birmingham, UK, November 3-7. There was much interest in studies relevant to the complete suppression of HIV replication by drugs.

A small but widely discussed study at the University of Amsterdam found that antiviral treatment which reduced viral load to undetectable levels in the blood, also reduced viral load to undetectable levels in lymph tissue. This was found in six out of six patients in a substudy of a larger trial. The lymph tissue was taken by a biopsy of the tonsils (which is much less invasive than the conventional procedure of removing a lymph node), before starting treatment and again after six months of treatment.

Researchers at the University of Minnesota developed the methodology to measure HIV in lymph tissue from tonsils; see recent paper by Haase AT, Henry K, Zupancic M and others. "Quantitative Image Analysis of HIV-1 Infection in Lymphoid Tissue." SCIENCE, November 8, 1996, pages 985-989.

Undetectable HIV viral load in the lymph nodes does NOT mean that the virus has been eradicated -- only that it is not actively reproducing. This viral load test only looks for viral particles; it does not detect the viral DNA that is still in the patients' cells -- ready to start up the infection again if the drugs are stopped. No one knows whether or not all these cells will eventually be eliminated by the body, if replication can be stopped for long enough.

While the growth of the virus is being completely suppressed, drug resistance apparently does not develop. The virus develops resistance when it is able to reproduce to some degree in the presence of the drugs, since then the viral variants which happen to be resistant to those drugs have a selective advantage, and can replace the more susceptible virus.

These results are not surprising, as there have long been indications that if viral replication is being suppressed in the blood by antiretroviral drugs, it is also suppressed in the lymph nodes (where there is much more HIV than in the blood, and where the virus is more important in the development of disease). And no one would expect the drug resistance of the virus to increase if the virus is not reproducing. But it is important to get direct evidence, since these questions are central to the interpretation of viral load tests and the management of therapy.

Note: The drug combination used in this University of Amsterdam study was ritonavir, AZT, and 3TC, in volunteers who had not used any antiretroviral before. However, there is nothing special about this particular combination; all evidence suggests that what is important is reducing the viral replication essentially to zero and keeping it there, using whatever drugs can do so for a particular patient. Similar suppression of replication has also been achieved with other combinations using a different protease inhibitor -- or even no protease inhibitor at all.

The main problem now is that some patients are more difficult to treat -- especially those with more advanced HIV disease, those who have already developed resistance to existing antiretrovirals, and those who cannot tolerate the drugs. This is why the problem of HIV treatment is not solved, despite the good results in some people. We need continuing development of better drugs -- with stronger and more durable antiviral effects, and/or less toxicity, and/or different resistance profiles than existing treatments, and/or drugs which may not be superior on the average but do work for some people when others treatments do not. And then of course there are still the economic barriers of getting effective treatments to those who need them.

More work is also needed on measurement of HIV in lymph tissue, since the most sensitive tests are quite difficult to do at this time.

There has long been an ongoing debate about the importance of aiming specifically for complete suppression of viral replication, vs. being willing to compromise on partial suppression due to practical concerns of toxicity, cost, and onerous compliance with regimens of three drugs or more. Professional opinion now seems to be moving more strongly toward the importance of complete suppression whenever antiviral therapy is used, because of the danger that otherwise the patients' virus will develop resistance to the drugs one by one, and each drug in turn will be lost for that person. This probably means that when therapy is begun, it will usually be with three or more drugs started together (instead of starting with one or two, then adding other drugs when the first ones fail); those who have already used antivirals will need to start or add combinations of at least two new drugs they have not seen before. What counts is keeping the viral load essentially at zero, whatever treatment that requires, because otherwise the virus will eventually escape the control of the drugs.Extending and applying these principles to the treatment of many different patients in different situations, given the limitations of the drugs available and the practical limitations imposed by the difficulties of therapy, will be a central challenge in AIDS medicine for the next several years.

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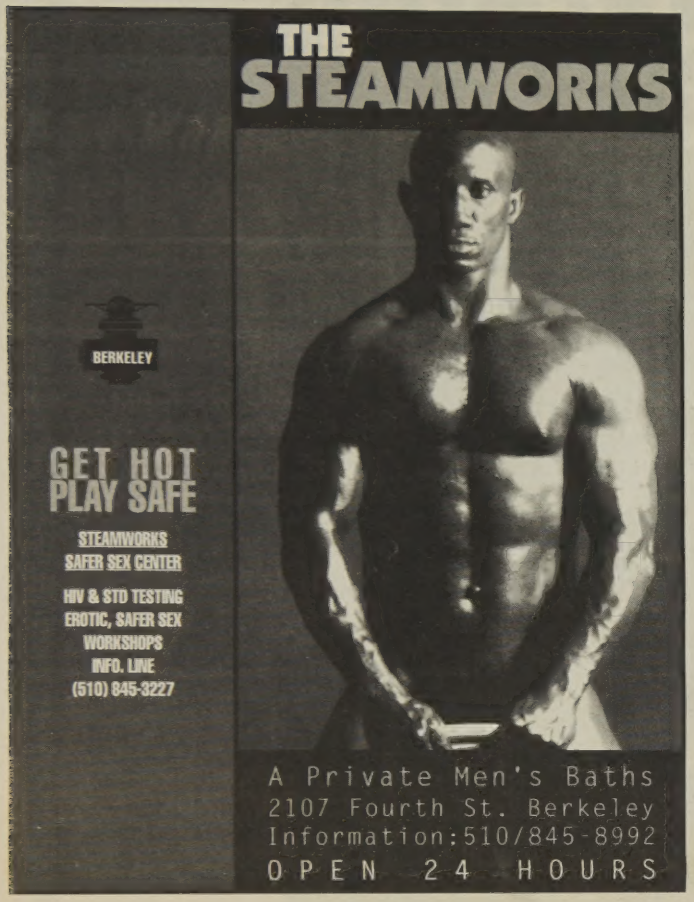
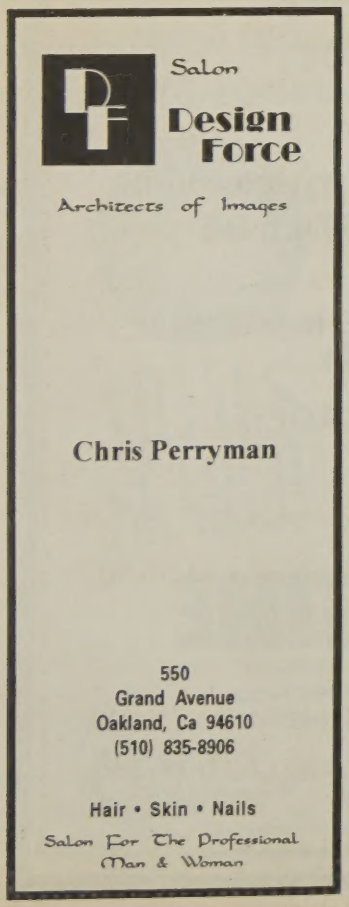
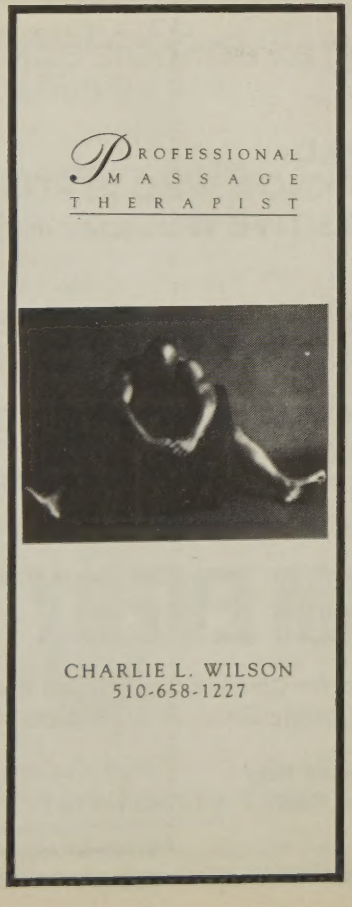






Colonol Abrams Interview

(Continued from pg18)

Some of her famous lines like: *It's Not Over and* verses like: *no man in the world (can let go of this Aquarius)* and *oooooh baabby* are sampled on many House tunes. Many of the kids are familiar with the verses and the voices but don't know who she is. She's probably not getting any money for it either. I know I've heard you signature "a woo woo woo woo" mixed into many house tracks. What do you do? Do you go after the people who use your voice without asking and sue?

CA: The way I look at it is that there is a good side of it and a bad side of it. The bad sad is that it was done and it was done with out my knowledge. The good side is it makes my voice popular. Many who have heard my voice and don't know that it is Colonel Abrams, will know in the future that it is me.

In this industry, I've learned that you have to take the negative and turn it into positive. Many of the records that people have heard - they don't even know that it is me. I just said to myself, "If people are making money sampling other artist then I could start my own label and sample myself." I've done production in the past and I am a producer and a songwriter. So who else would be a better candidate other than myself to start a label and to sign acts, writing and producing for deserving artist.

Well know I am starting my own record company. The first single off of the label (Colonel Records) will be debuting next week. The actually press release date on Colonel Records was the 13th of November. They will be distributed by Bassline records out of New York. I'm looking to do some House, young Hip Hop and positive rap. My son Comar, will be heading up my NR department for contemporary music for young people. I will be doing Jazz tracks which will be instrumental with a dance feel to them. Some of them will have a House appeal to them. I will also be signing on well known artist that had been forgotten by the industry. Artist who were popular in the '80s. I'll be signing a variety of different acts. My entire philosophy is that Colonel records will be a label where the legacy of Black music can continue. I don't intend it to be a stereotypical label just catering to one type of people.

I want to point out that we need more talent for the urban market which is really the Black market. We need more Black artist that are over 25. We need to another Gladys Knight and the Pips, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, Stylistics. This is not to criticize what's going on now. For instance, when I walk down in the Village in New York I may see some of the groups in their late 20's or early 30s standing on the corners that are singing that vintage "doo wop". I have had many groups approach me about promoting them because when they go to major labels their not getting the recognition or the record deals. I want to keep that door open because its needed. When you listen to house music you will realize that it does have a vintage R&B appeal. I believe that this is an indication that there is a need for that particular type of audience. The first new single of the new label is called *Let Us All Be Friends* by Mama's children. This track (the musical arrangement, production and vocals) has been my style from the very beginning. When you here it you will see how this particular song could have worked at the Paradise Garage. I am getting very good support from the DJ's too.

SJ: Now that you are on the production side, will you personally be singing vocals in the future?

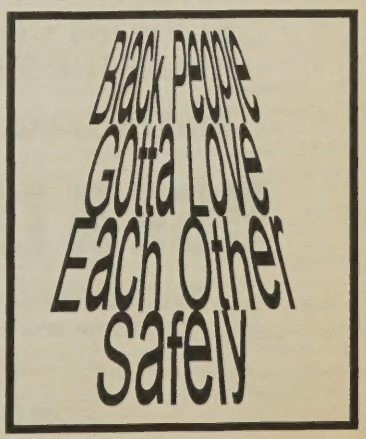
CA: Most definitely! I would be crazy if I didn't. It would be such a great opportunity. Right know I am not signed to any labels so that leaves me open to do what ever I want to do on Colonel Records. I have already done a new track called *The Vibe Track*. Its a real great track that talks about many of the great artist of the past like Billy Holiday, Wilson Picket, Aretha Franklin, Bobby Womach up to where we are know with Jodeci, Mary J. Blige, etc. This should come out about next year. You will hear many tracks from me that will remind you of the Clubhouse in DC Days. We've gotten away from the simplicity of music. Many of the successful songs today are that way because of simplicity.

SJ: What will we be seeing from you in the near future?

CA: There is a remake of *Not Gonna Let* coming out this week. It was put together by some DJ's out in San Francisco. The mixes that I've heard are pretty good mixes. I also want to mention that in addition to dance music I will be doing quite storm music.

SJ: Well I have really enjoyed this interview. Once again, I have always been a fan of yours so its nice to know that you are still around and doing good work. It was also nice just talking to you.

CA: I really appreciate that. Its a pleasure to know that your publication is letting people know that Artist such as myself are here. Keep up the good work!



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Dec. 1st, 1996
Love Center in collaboration and African American AIDS organizations.
66th and Cambden Streets
415-356-8136

"Party Till The Well Runs Dry" A new Years Eve Celebration Oakland, CA Info: 510-425-3490 Dec. 31, 1996

San Francisco Bay Area Friends - New Years Eve Gala 1736 Franklin St. Oakland, CA 94612 $40/ Single $60/ Couple

Steamworks Hot and Anal A Safer Sex Playshop Sponsorerd By The AIDS Project of The East Bay
Free Food, Videos, Passes May Be Available - Contact Kendrick Felder @ 510-834-8181

6th Annual Black Gay & Lesbian Video Film Festival Long Beach, CA February 13th &14th 1997 For More Info Contact Lisbet @ p.o. Box 6071, Albany, CA 94706

Tenth Annual Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum
February 1997
Los Angeles
(213) 964-7820

Transgender Task Force
Meets once a month call Patrick Forte @ 834-8181 for more details

Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Support Groups

Transgender Support Group
Every Tuesday
1:30pm - 3:00pm
Brother's Network 973 Market Suite 650 SF,CA

Black Men's Xchange (BMX)
Meets every Friday at 8:00pm AMASSI Inc. 351 15th St. Oakland, CA

Black Women's Xchange (BWX)
Meets every Friday at 8:00pm AMASSI Inc. 351 - 15th St. Oakland, CA

Men of All Colors Together
Regular Monthly Events Call (415) 675-0201
San Francisco, CA

Gay Men Of African Decent
Contact Don Jackson @212-420-0773 ext 13
New York City, NY

Black Gay Mens Rap
Every Friday at 7pm Unity Fellowship Center
5149 W. Jefferson LA,CA

Group Trips

Tri City Ski Weekend Winter Party Getaway
Jan. 24-26, 1997
Coome and let New York, Philadelphia and Wash., D.C. present you a funfilled weekend for the family we are proud to be part of open bar all weekend, buffet breakfasts and dinners ski-ing , theme parties, horse back riding , rollerskating and other in and outdoor activities $230 @based on 2 per room, $220 @based on 3 per room $200 @based on 4 per room transportation from each city is provided and hotel accommodations for further info James Saunders at 718-346-3589 NYC

Carnival , Rio De Janeiro, Brazil Feb. 5- Feb 13 1997 Group Trip for further info James Saunders at 718-346-3589 NYC

The Clublist

Northern, CA

Club Q 1st Friday of every month - thousands of women in the west coast largest venue for women interracial crowd. House, R&B at Towsend between 2nd &3rd. SF,CA

Cabel's Reef
Black crowd best nites Friday and Saturday Dancing Hip Hop & House 2272 Telegraph Ave Downtown Oakland
Down to Earth Crowd
No Cover Dancing
510-451-3777

The Comfort Zone
581 5th St.
Downtown Oakland - Mostly Black women & men
Hip Hop/ House/Funk
Saturday Nights Only
$5 Before 10:30 / $7 After 10:30 No Baseball Caps or Tennis Shoes

The Bench & Bar
Latin on Fridays Drag shows on Sunday - mostly black women and men. 11th and Oak in Oakland, CA

The Box
Interracial crowd Thursday nights Hip House 715 Harrison, SF,CA

The Stud
Interracial Crowd on Monday Nights Hip Hop/ House 9th & Harrison SF, CA

King Street Garage
21 & Over After hours dance party every first and third Friday / With Djs Black, David Harness & Patrick 174 King Street @ 3rd San Francisco, CA
415-522-6887

The End Up
Interracial / Dancing House / Dance Music best Sunday afternoons around 4pm 6th & Harrison SF, CA Cover

The Pendulum
Interracial - The only bar in the Castro with a large black male population Almost always busy 4146 18th
415-863-4441

Southern, CA

The Catch One
Women On Saturday
Men On Fridays Mostly Black on Holiday Weekends
4067 Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA

The Lodge
Mostly Black men on Saturday nights / Women's Nights on Wednesday 4923 Lankershim Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 818-769-7722

The Study
Mostly Black No dancing
Watering Hole
1723 N. Western
Los Angeles
213-464-9551

Washington D.C.

The Bachelor's Mill
Dance club downstairs / Pool Bar Upstairs busiest Thurs through Sat. 1104 8th St. Between the Navy Yard and the Marine Barracks
202-544-1931

The Edge / Wet
56 L St. S.E.
House music on Saturday Nights mostly black men / **WET** Nude Male Multiracial dancers in showers / Bar

Nob Hill
Black Bar with a little room to dance 1101 Kenyon St. N.W. Washington D.C.
202-797-1100

Tracks
Best Crowd On Sunday nights Black men and women Volley ball court, dancing 1111 1st St. S.E.
202-488-3320

New York City

U-men U-sweat after work Thursdaze FREE B 4 9PM at the **Side Bar** 366 eight ave. at 28 and 29th st.

U-men U-sweat at the **Octagon** - Hot African American Scene Every Friday 555 w. 33 rd st. at 11 ave.

CLUBHOUSE
Wednesday Nights
Black Down to Earth Crowd
215 W. 28th St. Near 8th ave. House Music, HipHop, Reggae Free B4 11pm
$8 After / 212-726-8820

SAT NITE IN DA BIG APPLE
Black
Music By
Dany Krivit and Trini
12 W 21ST NR 5TH AVE
212 206 7770

The Sound Factory
Saturday Nights 12 W.21 St. New York City 212-206-7770

The Monster
Sunday Nights Mostly Latino & Black Men piano bar upstairs / dancing downstairs 56 Greenwich St. New York City 212-255-8787

Sugar Babies
Monday's Nights multiracial Strictly House on Irving Place of off 14th St. between 3rd and 4th Ave. New York City

Keller's - No Dancing Bar 384 West St. New York City Watering Hole

Two Potatoes 143 Christopher St. New York City - bar only some shows Watering Hole

Crazy Nanny's Mostly Women about half African American Video Bar and Dance Club 21 7th Ave. New York City 212-366-6312

Chicago

The Generator Friday & Saturdays House Fierce Music 306 N. Halstead Chicago,IL
(312) 243-8889

Atlanta

Loretta's
708 Spring St.
404-874-8125
Dance Music / Bar

The Palace
15 Simpson
404-522-3000
R &B/House Music

The Wherehouse
339 Marietta St. NW
404-577-3309
Acid House from 11:00pm to 6:00am

The Marquette Lounge
809 Martin Luther King Dr N.W.

KARATS Jazz Club - Wednesdays though Sundays 511 Peachtree St. N.E.

Dallas, Texas

Traxx
House/ Hip Hip 90% Black
2821 St. Louis
Fri., Sat., Sunday

We

Are Aware
That Our Clublist
Is Incomplete

YOU

Can Assist By Sending Us List Of Popular Clubs That Feature African American And/Or Latino Crowds Please Specify Crowd Type (Women,Men, Both), Special Nights, Type Of Music, Location, And Phone Number If Available

Send info to:
Whazzup! Magazine Event & Clublist
P.O. Box 30993 Oakland, CA
email:
Whazzup411@aol.com
FAX: (510) 836-4759

E-MAIL ADS

The Personal Ads of the New Millennium

Men Seeking...

BLA-TINO - Private sex club for African American Men and Latinos in the NYC Area. XXX-tremely discretionary door. E-mail for regular parties info **Bla01tino@aol.com**. Check out our website at **http://home.earthlink.net/~a1blackelite**

ARRIBA DA PRIVATE SAFER SEX PARTY FOR HOT MACHO LATINO MALES N THOSE WHO LUV EM 718-670-3255

Older GWM, HIV- and into safer sex, looking for older gay black man. If you are over 45 I'm interested. Size is unimportant but maturity and friendship are. No drug users please. Send letters to **Boxholder 2 P.O. Box 1192 Los Gatos, CA 95031 1192**

Wanted: Gay Singers! for Doo Wop and Activism Acapella! The flirtations' Aurelio Font seeks BASS (with low "C"), and high TENOR (with easy falsetto, gospel sensibility) for local and out of state gigs. Musicianship, progressive politics, warmth, stage presence, hard work required. Sight reading a plus! For audition/interview, **contact: FromT2B@aol.com**

Afro-Caribbean GBM, 235 lbs, very muscular and very well hung. Kind. Honest. Handsome. 32 years old. Letters and photos to **M.C.James; Est. Pastory #27; St.John USVI 0083**

Showers for two, chocolate-covered strawberries, cool jazz, & hot, safe, slow sex. GBM, 42, 5'8", 185, photographer seeks muscular bottom who is intelligent, secure & imaginative. E-mail to: **Vegaman69@aol.com**

We are seeking other SGL couples interested in enhancing their relationship through discussion, tips, and other various activities. Monogamous couples only please. Send E-mail to: **TwoBlkLovers@aol.com**

Blk Man 6'2", 215lbs, 43" chest, 36" waist, 26" thighs. Dark-skinned brother looking for work-out partners. I work out at Gold's Gym Lake Merrit in Oakland and Bally's in L.A./ nationally. Only people serious about working out need to E-mail me: **DrkGem@aol.com**

Brother seeking platonic (No Sex) friendships with other Black, intelligent men, HIV+ ok. E-mail: **Blackboy9@aol.com**

BM44, multilingual, dancer, ´ 5'4", 125lbs, HIV-neg, well endowed, bubble butt, total top. ISO BM, affluent, articulate, virile, up to 6', 170lbs. You should be HIV-neg, & a generous bottom requiring daily servicing of both openings! No smokers, drug users, drinkers! Letters & Photos to **P.O. Box 4944, Baltimore, MD 212220-0944**

Overweight, middle-aged Black man looking for African God. Must be powerfully built & employed. Write letters to **P.O.Box 2764 Richmond, CA 94802-2764**

Fly brotha interested in communi - cating with others who are thinkers and feelers. What's really goin' on? A healthy appetite for jazz, hip-hop, Chaka and books is a good thing. Peace. E-mail to: **Acanapaint@aol.com**

N. Calif prof BM, 33,5'9",170, straight-acting seeks other BM for hanging out and possibly more. Self GIF available. I'm into movies, theater, music. You be similar. An aggressive bottom is a plus! E-mail: **topbm@crunch.hayward.ca.us**

Mature, attractive, GBM, tall, dark, handsome with diverse cultural interest seeks gentle, loving, BM partner. I'm 39, 5'11", 205, 8X6, dark muscular, soft spoken. I prefer and attract masculine yet vulnerable men who are intelligent and honest, creative and individualistic. If you're also non-smoking, HIV- and very well built, we could have possibilities. Letters to: **P.O., Box 59111, Philadelphia, PA 19102-9111**

Back in the Bay Area from NYC, I'M still a tall, slim, attractive caramel-colored African - American male, hazel eyes. Interested in meeting other men of color for intimacy. You should know what you want, not be afraid of sex and be good at it. You won't be disappointed. E-mail to **Httarget@aol.com**

GBM, 5'11'", slender physique, conservative appearance, HIV-neg, bottom into reading, movies, travel. ISO, GBM, HIV-neg, top, employed, with an interest in possible long-term relationship. Northern Virginia a plus! Respond to **IMN2UBM@AOL.COM**

Attractive top seeks masc brother or fem sister to spend quiet evenings with in Bay Area. Friendship first. E-mail to **BlWonderer@aol.com**

BM, 35, 5'11" 180, HIV-neg outdoorsman with high-intelligence and nice booty. ISO tall, thick, HIV-neg, in shape BM top (30-50) who can handle both ends. No versatiles. Send e-mail to **SMARTASS@aol.com**

GWM, 6', bl/bl, 185, muscular, 41, who thinks Black truly is beautiful. Wants to meet GBM of similar age and build. Letters to **Box 227, 2011 K St. NW, DC 20006**

BM, 6'2', 175, light complexion, clean cut, smooth body, spiritual, versatile, paralegal born in Midwest. Into swimming,cycling and therapeutic touch, ISO intelligent, mature, versatile, lean BM with positive attitude. Send e-mail to **KWISIE@AOL.COM**

GBM, CPA, 27, 5'11", nicely shaped muscular physique, top, medium brown, attractive, HIV-neg. I enjoy movies, scrabble, bowling, and romantic evenings with vintage R&B and jazz with someone special, ISO attractive, smart, HIV-neg GBM who's goal oriented, yet easy going and sensitive. Please no pretenders, bar flies, or overly-effeminate men. E-Mail: **MDCLASSACT @aol.com**

GBM, 38, 5'11" into fantasies. Tell me yours and I'll tell you mine. Send e-mail response to:**dmgoodmn@aol.com**

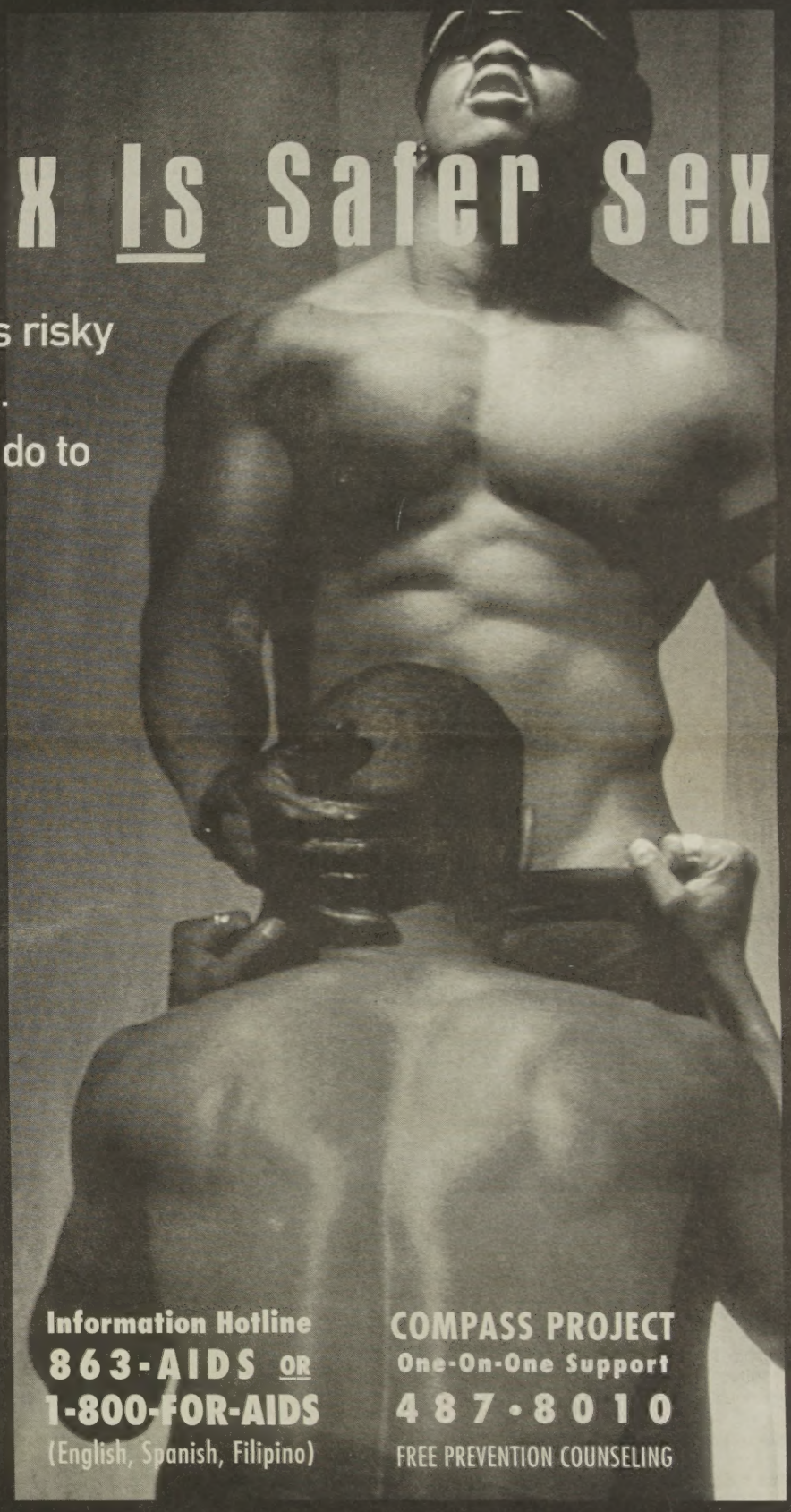
White Male, MID AGE, 5'8", 155, HIV-, bottom seeks black tops who are HIV neg, age open, married welcome, love to suck and f**k your pole send response to : Boxholder P.O. Box 396 Pleasanton, CA 94566

More About E-MAIL ADS

Whazzup! Magazine Personal Email Ads

E-mail ads are easy , totally anonymous and complimentary for readers who subscribe to Whazzup! Magazine. Simply place an ad up to 40 words, use either an email address or a P.O. BOX for direct private responses from people who read Whazzup! The content of the Ad may range from seeking a maid to seeking a lover. Use your imagination. E-mail ads are also available at the same price for parties not interested in subscribing. Just mail in ad with subscription form.

Oral Sex Is Safer Sex



Oral sex is much less risky for HIV than anal sex. Here's what you can do to make it even safer:

1. Don't let anyone cum in your mouth.
2. Avoid brushing or flossing before oral sex.
3. If you have cuts, sores, or bleeding gums, wait till they heal or use a condom.

Unprotected anal sex is responsible for almost all HIV transmission between men. Use condoms every time you fuck.

SF AIDS FOUNDATION

Information Hotline
863-AIDS OR
1-800-FOR-AIDS
(English, Spanish, Filipino)

COMPASS PROJECT
One-On-One Support
487•8010
FREE PREVENTION COUNSELING

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Whazzup! Magazine
Classified Ads

Misc.

Physio-Psychometry, The Art of Body Divination Tantric Psychic divinates destinies by reading body parts, such as feet, knees, hands, penis, testicles, face, etc. Call 415-25501164 for appointment $20 per reading

Gay Bar Lifestyle Stories Needed For Anthology Journalist Charles Michael Smith invites submissions of short fiction, poetry, essays, photographs, and artwork to be considered for " At The Old Place", an anthology about gay and lesbian bar culture.

Topics will include how to choose a bar, how to cruise in a bar, gay bars and the past, the backroom bar (experiences), alcoholism in the gay community, my first time in a gay bar, the bar in gay literature, gay bars across the United states and in foreign countries, etc.

Submit up to 3 essays and short stories: 10 photos slides, and/or photocopies of artwork: 5 poems. Each literary submission should be sent duplicate with a self addressed, stamped envelope (SASE).

Submissions lacking an SASE cannot be returned. A short biography should accompany all submissions. Writers, artists and photographers who's work appears in the anthology will receive a one time only honorarium and two copies of the book. Please send original published and/or unpublished work to Charles Micheal Smith at 1864 7th Avenue, Apt. 5, New York, New York 10026.

New Video company seeks muscular men for erotic sensual bondage videos$$$ Commercial or private. Send your description and contact number to P.O. Box 5401 Oakland, CA 94605 P&G entrance. You will be contacted for an interview.

Employment

Advertising Sales - Whazzup! Magazine has immediate openings for independent sales representatives to sell display advertising in New York City, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, GA, Los Angeles, Oakland & San Francisco. Earn a generous commission as you help build a magazine that represents all aspects of the African- American LesBiGayTrans community. Contact Stephen Johnson at 510-836-4759.

NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON AIDS PREVENTION SEEKS CANDIDATES FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
National Task Force on AIDS Prevention (NTFAP) seeks applicants for the position of Executive Director. NTFAP is a San Francisco-based AIDS education and services organization and a national AIDS advocacy and community development agency. Send qualifications for the position and salary requirements to: National Task Force on AIDS Prevention, c/o Steve Wakefield, Board Secretary, 1948 West Evergreen, Chicago, IL 60622-1932. NTFAP is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Housing Services Coordinator: The Housing Services Coordinator (HSC) serves a county - wide housing assistance resource to service providers and clients. The HSC coordinates housing vouchers, housing management, and shallow rent subsidy programs including data collection, record keeping and information for quarterly reports. Qualifications: B.A. Degree in human services feild or equivalent experience of 3-5 years. Advanced training and experience in low income housing assistance services. Knowledge and ability to understand fair housing regulations; Ability to work closely with landlords and contracting agencies. Experience and ability to work sensitively with women, drug users, homeless persons, bereavement issues, medical professionals, entitlement agencies, and other service providers. Experience with and proven ability to track data for contract reporting. Ability to work as a team member, supporting other department staff and maintaining department objectives. Beginning salary 29,150. Send Resume and cover letter to: Al Meza AIDS Project of the East Bay 651 - 20th St. Oakland, CA 94612

Housing Case Manager: 22,000 TO 27,500 Plus benefits. Perform client intakes and process applications for prospective clients. Assist clients in obtaining benefits, finding permanent lowcost housing, obtaining emergency food and clothing, making contact with other service providing agencies and in increasing clients capacity for independent problem solving and independent living. Requirements: AIDS Sensitivity; Word processing skills; Ability to motivate and provide psychosocial support to homeless persons; High school graduate with some college preferred. Duties: Perform telephone an in person client intakes; Assist persons with obtaining needed resources and referrals; Interface with participating landlords; Schedule and facilitate transitional housing group meetings; Maintain client files and program statistics; Assist with the generation of program reports. Send Resume to AMASSI, Inc., 351 -15th St. Oakland,CA 94612 Phone 510-433-9377 FAX 510-835-4206

AIDS HEALTH EDUCATOR: (1 Positions) Provide community outreach, one-to-one HIV/AIDS health education, and/or facilitate group risk reduction sessions to African - American gay/bisexual men in Alameda County. Must have HIV educational outreach experience & legitimate knowledge of African-American gay/bisexual culture. Salary mid 20's plus benefits. APEB-personnel; 651 20th Street; Oakland, CA 94612.

Wanted: Gay Singers! for Doo Wop and Activism A Capella! The flirtations' Aurelio Font seeks BASS (with low "C"), and high TENOR (with easy falsetto, gospel sensibility) for local and out of state gigs. Musicianship, progressive politics, warmth, stage presence, hard work required. Sight reading a plus! For audition/interview, contact: FromT2B@aol.com

Whazzup! Magazine

Classified Ads
First 30 words or less $15
Each additional word 25¢

Print or type ad. Form not necessary.

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New York , NY

Atlanta, GA

Oakland, CA

San Francisco, CA

Los Angeles, CA

Washington D.C.

Whazzup! Magazine has immediate openings for independent sales representatives to sell display advertising throughout your area. Earn a generous commission as you help build a magazine that represents all aspects of the African American LesBiGayTrans community. Contact Stephen Johnson at 510-836-4759. Email: Whazzup 411@aol.com.